# CONTEXTUALISING THE CONTINENTAL:

## The Work of German Émigré Architects in Britain, 1933-45

Volume One of Two Volumes

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## Summary

Between 1933 and 1940 between sixty and ninety German architects arrived in Britain as émigrés fleeing from Nazi oppression. The Germany which they left had, until Hitler's intervention, been the centre of European architectural modernism. Making their passage into Britain, they encountered a country whose architectural climate was altogether more traditional. When the first German architects arrived in 1933, architectural modernism was only just taking root, but only a few years later Britain's architectural culture boasted a thriving modernist scene. This coincidence has led historians to draw a direct connection between the presence of German architects and the establishment of modernism in Britain.

This thesis, however, advances the current historiography by showing that the role of German émigrés was, rather than to initiate British architectural modernism, to support a development which had taken root before their arrival. Through examination of a number of sources - including personal papers, drawings, photographs, archive material, buildings, and personal interviews - it explores processes of acculturation as evidenced by the work of the émigré architects. A number of in-depth case studies reveal that the new environment in Britain provoked a variety of responses among the German architects, whose work frequently digressed into the realms of British architectural traditions (taking particular inspiration from the architecture of the Georgian period). Looking beyond well-known figures such as Mendelsohn and Gropius, the thesis concludes that the story of architectural migration from Germany to Britain cannot be told in terms of modernism alone. It shows that responses to the émigré situation were highly dependent on the individual architect's background, his or her experience, age, standing and time of arrival, but reveals that, disregarding these differences, all émigré architects to some degree adapted to their new working environment, a tendency which has been described as New Contextualism.

Although submitted in the field of History of Art, the scope of this thesis is methodologically and epistemologically wider than might usually be associated with this field. Despite being strongly visually based in its main analysis, the work is inter-disciplinary in approach, incorporating elements of biography, history, sociology, and exile studies, therefore expanding the boundaries of art historical study.

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# Introduction

**acculturate** /ə'kʌltʃə,reɪt/ *v.* **1** *intr.* adapt to or adopt a different culture. **2** *tr.* cause to do this. □□ **acculturation** *n.* **acculturative** *adj.* [1]

"Please do not attempt to become hundred-per-cent Englishmen. You will never succeed... Remain rather good Germans, for in the coming years the world will have need of good Germans. And if you can absorb something of the English spirit into your Germanness, you will render good service to both peoples."

Wickham Steed at the Free German League of Culture's memorial meeting for Ernst Toller and Josef Roth, 1940.[2]

Between 1933 and 1941 around 300,000 Germans left their home country to flee Hitler's fascist regime and the European war.[3] This exodus, which included large parts of Germany's intellectual and cultural vanguard, not only marked a pronounced caesura in the cultural history of Germany, but was also of vital significance for the cultural evolution of those countries which received the émigrés. Migration inevitably involves cultural exchange. On the one hand, it forces the émigrés to confront their own cultural attitudes and to compare and often adjust them to dominant cultural tendencies in the receiving country. On the other, if the foreign elements are strong enough, they will make an impact on their host country, influence the course of its developments, provoke symbiosis, exchange, progress. From this exchange arises the central dilemma of emigration: how much to retain of one's own culture and how much to absorb of the foreign one - in short, the dilemma of acculturation.

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[1] *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1990)
[2] Quoted in François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens* (London, 1940), p.42

In the study of architectural migration, this dilemma plays a central role, because architecture is the most context-bound of all the arts; unlike painting, music, theatre or other 'portable' art forms, architecture is not only defined by surrounding cultural and intellectual conditions but also by the concrete, physical context of its natural and built environment. This thesis deals with architectural migration between Germany and Britain in the 1930s. Its main objective is to examine the dialectics of acculturation in the inter-war work of German émigré architects in Britain. The issue of acculturation, as identified poignantly in the above extract from a speech by Wickham Steed, centred around the dichotomy between 'remaining German' and 'becoming English'. This thesis will thus address how German architects responded to the shift from the Continent to the Island: what impact did it have on their careers and, most importantly, how did it influence their work? To what extent did émigré architects respond and adapt to their new environment, and to what extent did they ignore changed conditions? While concentrating on the question of the influence of British conditions on the Germans and their designs, the study will also address another question: what impact did the presence and work of the émigrés have on British architecture and its development? It will assess the differences between German and British architectural culture during the inter-war period and establish the amount of inter-change and symbiosis which took place between the two cultures as a result of emigration. In doing so, established preconceptions about the role of German émigrés in the development of British architecture will be scrutinised and revised where necessary.

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[3] Figure cited in Gerhard Hirschfeld (ed.), *Exile in Great Britain* (London & New Jersey, 1984), p.2

The story of German émigré architects in Britain is a story of dilemmas, paradoxes and syntheses; a tightrope walk between a variety of opposing forces and contrasting influences. Much of this had its origin in the contrasting attitudes to architectural innovation in Germany and Britain in the period. While Germany, during the 1920s, had developed into a leader of avant-garde design and theory, Britain remained largely unaffected by modernist developments on the Continent. Yet, during the 1930s, while in National Socialist Germany modernist activity was restricted to a minimum, Britain saw the emergence of its own modernist movement. This, however, ran parallel to a prevalence of strong traditionalist forces and thus frequently met with opposition. Against this background, many of the dichotomies experienced by the émigrés can be explained in terms of the conflicting interests of progressive and conservative tendencies. Since many of the émigrés had experimented with modernism before their arrival in Britain, adherence to pre-emigration patterns and the assimilation of British culture often involved them in a choice between modernism and traditionalism. Another émigré dilemma, that between ideas and possibilities, was also largely defined in stylistic terms. Although some German modernists were received warmly by pro-modern sections of the British profession, who had high expectations about the émigrés' reforming influence on British architecture, they were offered few building opportunities. Limited modernist opportunities clashed with economic necessities, and thus forced many émigrés to employ a pragmatic approach. This frequently involved the assimilation and regurgitation of British architectural traditions and led to the sometimes uneasy coexistence of German and British elements in the émigrés' designs; architectural integrity was balanced out against practical

considerations. This thesis aims to explore the conflicting influences at work in the experience of German émigré architects in Britain, and to trace how these paradoxes are reflected or resolved in their work.

Some facts and definitions are required at this point in order to explain the framework of the narrative. Between 1933 and 1940 between sixty and ninety German architects emigrated to Britain as a result of the conditions in Germany. 54 of these architects have been identified and listed in the Appendix to this study. Most of them were Jewish, most of them had worked in Berlin prior to their emigration, but otherwise they had few things in common; they differed in age, background, experience, standing and, above all, their approach to design. Given this heterogeneity, does it make sense to study émigré architects as a group? The answer lies in the cultural discrepancy identified above: disregarding their individual background, all of the architects included in this thesis experienced the same cultural shift; they had all experienced the same cultural environment in Germany, and all faced the same unfamiliar architectural culture in Britain. Although individual circumstances and responses differed, each émigré architect was confronted with the same dilemma of how to acculturate their German-grown ideas to British conditions.

In order to keep the heterogeneity of the group of émigrés to a minimum, clear-cut definitions have been applied in the selection of architects included in this thesis. Above all, the study is only concerned with German architects. Architects of other nationalities, such as Austrian or Hungarian, are only included if they received a substantial part of their architectural education in Germany or worked in Germany for a substantial period prior to their emigration. The intention

behind this concentration on Germany is to create a coherent set of circumstances with which to compare the situation in Britain. Other scholars of exile studies have used 'German-speaking' as a working category, but within the study of architecture this category is less useful, since it does not account for the vital differences in architectural cultures between Germany and other German-speaking countries, such as Austria or Switzerland.[4] Given Germany's leading position in the international avant-garde, it also makes for the most interesting comparison with Britain. Moreover, it was Germany, the cradle of National Socialism, which experienced the largest and earliest waves of emigration.

Avoiding "elastic" definitions employed by other writers,[5] this thesis deals only with architects; it largely excludes émigrés who predominantly worked as designers, engineers, art historians or artists. Dealing with the phenomenon of architectural migration as a direct result of political events, the thesis also excludes all architects who arrived and settled in Britain before 1933 or after 1945. Architects such as Michael Rosenauer, Ernst Schaufelberg or Franz Stengelhofen (who arrived before or during 1930), Julius Posener or Adolf Rading (who arrived in 1948 and 1950 respectively) will not feature here because they came to Britain of their own free choice and under different political and economic circumstances than the émigrés of the years 1933-39. Similarly, this study does not include émigrés who became architects in Britain

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[4] A similar problem arises when émigré architects in Britain are generalised under the 'Continental' label. Since pre-emigration conditions were different for each European country, it is difficult to justify such a sweeping categorisation.

[5] Charlotte Benton, for instance, admits that her "...definition 'architect' is, at times, a little elastic." See *A Different World. Émigré Architects in Britain, 1928-1958* (London, 1995), p.8. The publication accompanied an exhibition at the RIBA Heinz Gallery in London of the same title.

rather than in Germany.[6] The inclusion of British-trained Germans would not only push the volume of material beyond the possibilities of a doctoral thesis, but it would also make no sense in terms of cultural definitions and the objectives of the present study. Thus individuals such as Frank Tischler, Wolfgang Gerson, Gerhard Kallmann, Günther Hoffstead, Isi Metzstein, A. C. Wolffe and many others are not featured, because they escape the definition of 'émigré architects'; their work does not have its cultural origin in Germany but in Britain.[7]

A few words are needed to explain the terminology used in this thesis. The reader will notice that the terms 'exile' and 'refugee' have been avoided throughout the text in favour of the more neutral terms 'émigré' and 'emigration'. The reason for this is that 'exile' and 'refugee' are terms which imply a certain political unavoidability, whereas 'émigré' includes the option of a more voluntary migration. Since some of the architects included in the study were Aryans whose migration was motivated as much by personal, professional and economic reasons as by other factors, they are more correctly described as 'émigrés' than 'refugees'. All foreign terms used in the text, particularly German expressions, are listed and explained in a Glossary at the end of the thesis; they are not usually translated in the text. It may also be pointed out at this point that although many architects anglified their names or the spelling of their names at some point after emigration, they will be referred to by the name which they bore at the time of emigration, in order to avoid confusion. Similarly, those who later

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[6] Thus it excludes those who came to Britain without higher education, as well as those who received large parts of their education in Britain after having interrupted their architectural studies in Germany.

[7] That these younger architects, many of whom had come to Britain on the *Kindertransporte*, do not classify themselves as 'émigré architects' has been repeatedly confirmed during my research. A. C. Wolffe, for instance, poignantly wrote to me: "I do not seem to come within the definition of your study as the decision to become an architect was made in this country. I was

changed their names as the result of marriage will be referred to by their maiden name throughout.

Finally, the time-frame applied in this study is restricted to the period 1933-45. It is no coincidence that these dates are those of the Third Reich, for this congruity expresses the direct connection between emigration and National Socialist rule in Germany. Although naturally the story of the émigré architects continues into the post-war period, 1945 marked a watershed in British architectural culture. After this date, the role of modernism and the whole of the architectural profession underwent such drastic changes that - though certainly fascinating - to include their assessment, and the role of German émigrés within them, would go well beyond the boundaries of what is possible in this thesis, both in terms of word limits and research time allocated.

Because of the same limitations, certain choices had to be made as to the architects discussed. Not all of the 54 architects identified in Appendix 1 could be discussed in detail in the thesis. Instead, about a dozen individuals have been picked out for in-depth case studies. On the one hand, their selection was determined by a preference for the most interesting, competent and successful figures. The other criterion, however, has been to create a representative cross-section of the German architects and their various design responses to the émigré situation. Here, a conscious effort was made to include less well-known figures and those who did not exclusively build in a modernist mode, not only in order to present a more complete picture, but also in order to fill a gap in the existing literature, which has largely focused on aspects of modernism.

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trained here and have practised entirely in Scotland and I do not think that any of my work

In other respects, too, the present thesis contributes to the existing historiography of both the study of architectural migration and British inter-war architecture. At the outset of the research the literature dealing with architectural migration from Germany to Britain was limited to just two key texts. The first was a 6-page article by Christian Wolsdorff, a contribution to the catalogue for the 1986 Berlin exhibition *Kunst im Exil in Großbritannien, 1933-45*,[8] which also included the first coherent collection of short biographies of German-speaking émigré architects in Britain. Although a useful account of bureaucratic procedures and professional reception, Wolsdorff's text offers a limited picture, mainly because it does not discuss any of the émigrés' actual work. The second text, Charlotte Benton's *A Different World. Émigré Architects in Britain 1928-58*, appeared in 1995, also in conjunction with an exhibition, this time in the Heinz Gallery in London.[9] This text offers a good overview and makes accessible a large amount of material hitherto largely unknown, but because of its wide scope (encompassing three decades and émigrés of all nationalities), Benton's account, too, fails to progress beyond a general factual-biographical narrative. Both Wolsdorff's and Benton's texts draw on a third important source, the *Biographical Dictionary of Central European Émigrés*,[10] which provides biographical entries for a number of architects. In addition to this, several of the architects featured here have received individual attention in the

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relates to my origin in Germany." (Letter to the author, Sept. 18th, 1997.)

[8] See Hartmut Frowein (ed.), *Kunst im Exil in Großbritannien 1933-45*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1986), p.105-110. For biographical listing see p.169ff.

[9] The exhibition was organised by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in December 1995 and January 1996.

[10] Röder, W. & H. A. Strauss (eds.), *Biographisches Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration nach 1933 / International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Emigrés 1933-45*, 3 volumes (Munich, New York, London, Paris, 1983). The entries in this dictionary were largely provided by the émigrés themselves.

historiography.[11] Such studies, although often useful on the architects' British work, naturally offer no insight into the broader issues of architectural migration. The contribution of the current study has been to supplement substantially the limited cast of Benton's story[12] and to discuss with considerably more focus the work of the émigrés. Appendix 2 provides for the first time a listing of the executed and unexecuted British projects of the most important German émigré architects. Further, this study locates the émigrés' work firmly in the British cultural context in which their ideas and structures took shape: their buildings can only be understood in relation to contemporary as well as historical developments in Britain. Research undertaken for the study has uncovered several previously unknown works, and results in many buildings being examined and illustrated for the first time.

The interest in architectural migration has increased considerably during the duration of my research, especially in Germany, and the last two years have seen a number of new publications in the field.[13] In particular the post-1933 work of Mendelsohn and Breuer have received renewed attention recently.[14] An international conference on 'Architecture and Exile' which took place in October 1998 in Berlin also revealed that much new research was taking place in the

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[11] For these texts see references in the main text. Most individual attention has been paid to Gropius, Mendelsohn and Breuer.

[12] Some 18 new names (of German architects only) have been added to Benton's list of émigrés.

[13] See for instance Myra Warhaftig, *Sie legten den Grundstein. Leben und Wirken deutschsprachiger jüdischer Architekten in Palästina 1918-1948* (Berlin, 1997); Klemens Klemmer, *Jüdische Baumeister in Deutschland. Architektur von der Shoah* (Stuttgart, 1998); Bernd Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil. Deutschsprachige Architekten in der Türkei 1925-1955* (Berlin, 1998)

[14] As can be seen in the following publications: Regina Stephan (ed.), *Erich Mendelsohn. Gebaute Welten.* (Ostfildern-Ruit, 1998); Kathleen James, *Erich Mendelsohn and the Architecture of German Modernism* (Cambridge, 1997); Joachim Driller, *Marcel Breuer: die Wohnhäuser 1923-73* (Stuttgart, 1998)

field.[15] In the context of this new research, this thesis aims to fill the gap of the somewhat neglected British side of the story.

Finally, a few words about the organisation of the following text. Given the multi-faceted and interdisciplinary character of the topic, which encompasses aspects of exile studies, biography, history, sociology, politics and architecture, certain priorities had to be identified. The choice was made to write a thesis which is not predominantly a biographical or socio-historical narrative, but an account centred around visual analysis and contextualisation. Thus although it includes a summary introduction to the political and historical backgrounds of architectural emigration to Britain (Chapters 1.a. & b.), as well as brief biographical accounts of the architects discussed, the bulk of the text is concerned with the actual British work of German émigrés in the inter-war period, and the question of how it interacted with the architectural scene in Britain.

[15] The publication of the proceedings of this 3-day conference is planned.

# 1. EMIGRATION

## 1.a. *Origins*: The Effect of National Socialism on German Architecture and its Practitioners

The period between the two World Wars in Germany was a turbulent one in every respect. Seen from a historical distance, it conjures up a roller coaster ride, moving rapidly through a succession of political, economic and cultural ups, downs and U-turns. This is not the place to discuss general historical and cultural developments in inter-war Germany, which have been studied in detail elsewhere. However, before launching into the story of the experiences of German émigré architects in Britain, it is necessary to understand why and in what circumstances they emigrated from Germany. Equally, in order to be able to contextualise the émigrés' work in Britain, and to assess the changes that accompanied the shift of work environment, it is necessary to be aware of the cultural background which had shaped the architects' ideas prior to their emigration. Hence this chapter will summarise the particular character of Germany's architectural culture of the period and place the future émigrés within this framework. It will then discuss the impact of fascist ideology and legislation on architecture and architects in Germany. Having established the reasons for architectural emigration from Germany, an assessment of the economic circumstances in which this occurred will be added to the discussion about politics.

Politics lay at the heart of all important developments in German inter-war culture. Thus the defeat in the First World War, and the horrors experienced during it, gave rise to a revolutionary spirit of renewal and change: "It was not

possible for anyone to make use of any pre-war traditions, for that period was perforce regarded as the cause of the misfortunes of the past, and because every achievement of those days seemed more or less to hang together with the origins of the war..."[1] Politically, the desire to break with the past and form a better society was expressed in the founding of the new democratic republic. Culturally, the Weimar Republic marked a period of unprecedented activity and freedom during which Germany established itself as one of the leading forces of the European *avant-garde*. Architecture played an important part in the cultural revolution which gripped the country. Progressive architects began to see themselves as part of the artistic-spiritual vanguard of the new society, in the creation of which they saw themselves playing a significant role. The years between 1918 and 1923-24 was a period of ideas, visions, manifestos and experiments. Revolutionary organisations (emulating the Russian Vkhutemas), such as the Arbeitsrat für Kunst (1918) and the Bauhaus (1919), were founded, and Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius emerged as influential spokesmen, who powerfully captured revolutionary ideas with the metaphors of the crystal and the cathedral.[2]

But although architects agreed on the necessity of developing a new set of forms and references, no consensus existed about the direction this was to take; as Gropius wrote: "We are floating in space and cannot yet perceive the

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[1] Bruno Taut, *Modern Architecture* (London, 1929), pp.92-93

[2] See for example Taut's *Alpine Architektur* (1919), *Die Stadtkrone* (1919) and Gropius' *Programm des Staatlichen Bauhauses in Weimar* (1919) with its Feininger woodcut on the cover. These early ideas shared an interest in the creation of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the work of art encompassing and uniting all the arts and crafts. Ironically, such visions, particularly Gropius' cathedral imagery, betray the influence of pre-war ideas rooted in the Arts and Crafts Movement and the teaching of the Englishmen Morris and Ruskin.

new order."[3] From this uncertainty the highly individualistic experiments which are generally labelled 'Expressionist architecture' were born in the work of Mendelsohn, Poelzig, Taut, Bonatz, Höger and others. But it was the 'functional' approach, already proposed in 1914 in Gropius' Fagus Factory, which was to provide the "new order" in architecture and to develop into the stylistic canon of *Neues Bauen*. The new geometric, ornament-free forms which emerged were inspired by Holland's De Stijl and Russia's Constructivism, but their deeper origins lay in the acceptance of the principles and aesthetics of the machine: the employment of new industrial materials and construction methods, the standardisation of components for prefabrication and mass-production, the rational response to functional needs and the simplification of design.[4] *Neue Sachlichkeit* became the catch-phrase of the day. Many German architects increasingly subscribed to the new architecture, whose essence and principles are epitomised in Gropius' Bauhaus school at Dessau of 1925-6 [1]. But *Neues Bauen* was more than a building fashion. Coupled with social concerns for adequate, hygienic and cheap housing for workers, the ideas of the new architecture soon received support from local government. Under the auspices of Ernst May and Martin Wagner respectively, the cities of Frankfurt and Berlin launched extensive housing programmes which exclusively employed architects designing in the new idiom. The numerous modernist *Siedlungen* [2] which remain in these cities are a reminder of the prolific and progressive years between 1924 and 1930.

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[3] Gropius in *Ja! Stimmen des Arbeitsrates für Kunst in Berlin* (Berlin, 1919), quoted in Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-45* (London, 1968), p.45

[4] Most of these principles had already been formulated by the Deutscher Werkbund before the war (as expressed in Gropius' buildings for the Werkbund's exhibition in Cologne in 1914), but it was only after the economic recovery in 1923-4, that they began to see widespread realisation.

While modernism was rapidly disseminated in Germany, infiltrating all building sectors, it also began to branch out and seek contact with other European countries which had experienced similar movements, particularly France and Holland. Such international tendencies are evident in the 1927 exhibition at Weissenhof in Stuttgart, which featured buildings by the most acclaimed German and other European modernists of the time, including Gropius [27], Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier and Oud. The same year, German modernists founded the architectural group Der Ring,[5] which in 1928 joined with other European architects to form CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) to give modern architecture an international front. (It is worth noting here that Britain did not participate in any of these international efforts at this time, nor, in fact, in the modern architectural movement. Only in 1934 did ideas from the Continent find sufficient response in Britain for the British to send a delegation to CIAM (see 2.a.).) It was the international aspect, the spread of a seemingly unified modernist idiom across national borders, which provided the theme for a New York exhibition in 1932: its title 'The International Style' thereafter came to serve as a label for the new architecture and survives in the terminology of modernism to the present day.[6]

For several years, Germany was so captivated by a progressive spirit that, in the eyes of some architects, "nearly everything was built on modern lines and

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[5] The Ring included a number of important figures such as Walter Gropius, Martin Wagner, Ernst May, Bruno Taut and Ludwig Hilbersheimer.

[6] The exhibition was at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. See the accompanying catalogue-book by H.-R. Hitchcock and P. Johnson: *The International Style* (New York, 1932). However, the term *International Style* has certain limitations in as much as it betrays a merely visual approach to the new architecture which excludes the social aspects at its heart. It also makes no allowance for the transformations the style was undergoing from the mid-1930s

the erection of an old fashioned building was almost impossible."[7] However, when looking at examples such as the Dessau Bauhaus or the Weissenhof Siedlung, it is important to remember that while the new architecture, as a style, spread rapidly in Germany, it did not always appear in such pure ideological and visual forms. The vocabulary of *Neues Bauen* soon met and mingled with traditional architectural forms, thus creating a wide range of stylistic responses.[8] This fusion gave birth to what could be termed a 'Moderate Modern' stream of architectural design, which constituted a large proportion of buildings erected during the 1920s and early 1930s, and as such demonstrates the extent to which even the most conventional architects sooner or later felt obliged to adopt contemporary forms (see also 3.b.ii.). But modernism never took over all, or even the major part, of German architecture. There were still plenty of architects, particularly outside the urban centres, who continued architectural traditions from the pre-war period, such as the Expressionist tendencies of public and commercial buildings, the Classicism of grand Wilhelminian buildings and the vernacular in all its regional variations.[9]

To illustrate the variety of architectural styles practised in Germany during the 1920s, we need to look no further than the architects who are the subject of this study. A look at their German work will provide an interesting cross-section of German architecture of the period, demonstrating the different ways in which the

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onwards. While 'International Style' is a commonly used label among English-speaking scholars, many German scholars prefer to avoid it, using *'Neues Bauen'* instead.

[7] As observed retrospectively by the Berlin architect Ernst Freud: "A Foreign Architect observes England", letter to the editor, *Design for Today*, Oct. 1934, Vol.2, No.18, p.395

[8] For an overview of the variety of modern building in Germany during the 1920s and early 30s see John Zukowsky (ed.), *The Many Faces of Modern Architecture - Building in Germany between the World Wars* (Munich & New York, 1994)

[9] It is interesting to note that the decorative, geometric modernism with classical undertones which was developed in France and played such an important role in early British responses to modern forms (see 2.a.), had little impact on German architecture.

architects engaged with modernism before emigration. At one end of the scale, Britain received two of the most important modernist architects of the time (even though it lost them to the United States after a few years): Walter Gropius and Erich Mendelsohn, who represented the radical vanguard of the German émigré community found in Britain in the 1930s.[10] Also a modernist, though of lesser importance on the international avant-garde scene, was Eugen Kaufmann. Having worked closely with May in Frankfurt and Russia, he represented the scientific approach to planning and social housing which distinguished the modern movement in Germany [2]. A large number of Germans who came to Britain had previously made significant contributions to the social housing in the new idiom, among them Bruno Ahrends and Erwin Gutkind. Gutkind's work [3], however, stands for a less radical-dogmatic, more 'artistic' approach to modernist design, in which the harsh white, cubic forms of *Neues Bauen* are softened by the use of brick elements and a more sculptural treatment.[11] Marcel Breuer came from yet another direction: he had been a furniture designer with architectural ambitions at the Bauhaus [34a & 36]. His training there had taught him an 'interdisciplinary' approach to modern design.

While these architects' work was consistently devoid of references to the past, many others were less determined to break with traditional forms. A hybrid of conventional and contemporary design can be found in the work of many of the future émigrés. Rudolf Fränkel, for example, epitomises such an ambiguous

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[10] Yet, although both were modernists, they represented different approaches: while Gropius was an exponent of the (characteristically German) collective approach, Mendelsohn was an individualist who found little pleasure in working collectively. Thus Gropius instigated, participated in and headed various groups and committees (The Ring, Bauhaus, CIAM...) and took part in team projects (such as at Siemensstadt in Berlin), while Mendelsohn worked independently, receiving his commissions exclusively from private clients.

[11] For Gutkind's German work see Rudolf Hierl, *Erwin Gutkind - Architektur als Stadtraumkunst 1886-1968* (Basel, Boston, Berlin, 1992).

attitude in his Berlin Gesundbrunnen *Siedlung* of 1928 [52], in which relatively conventional, pitched-roofed blocks merge into a flat-roofed, expressively Mendelsohnian corner solution.[12] Similarly, Harry Rosenthal's Haus Salzbrunn in Berlin [4] combines restrained, white-walled elevations with Expressionist details, conventional vertical windows and a hipped roof.[13] Many not only diluted the radical modernist language by fusing it with traditional elements, but avoided modern forms altogether until about 1930. This was for instance the case with Friedrich Herrmann and Ernst Freud. As a faithful Bonatz pupil, most of Herrmann's domestic designs of the 1920s were in the tradition of a German country house style, while his designs for public schemes echoed his teacher's fusion of modern and classical elements.[14] Otherwise, he tried himself on a variety of styles until he finally arrived at modernist forms.[15] A similarly eclectic and conciliatory approach is characteristic of Freud's German work [5] (see 3.b.ii.).[16] However, besides all these modern tendencies, traditionalism was still alive in Germany throughout the whole inter-war period, as can also be seen in the work of the architects included in this study. Thus James Wolfsohn, though a keen user of new materials and construction methods, never abandoned convention in matters of style,[17] and Heinz Reifenberg, though capable of applying himself to the modernist idiom on occasions, continued to design

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[12] See *Moderne Bauformen*, 1928, Vol.7, No.1, pp.249-252. For Fränkel's work see also Chapter 3.b.i.

[13] See special feature on Rosenthal in *Bauwelt,* No.37, 1931

[14] His lack of commitment to a definite stylistic line can be seen in a series of small railway buildings he designed in 1929, their stylistic treatment ranging from timber-framed vernacular to 'brick modern'. See material in Royal Institute of British Architects Drawings Collection (RIBADC), RAN 59.

[15] See ibid. and exhibition catalogue *F.H. Herrmann. An Architect at Work, 1927-77* (London, 1977). The latter shows that Herrmann continued to oscillate between a response to traditional forms and a contemporary idiom in his British work.

[16] Interestingly, when they had settled in England, both Herrmann and Freud, though continuing in the same design approach, were concerned to emphasise their own modernity.

[17] His traditionalist ideas on style, leaning towards the classical, are visible also in his interior designs for the Wiener Library in London (c.1938-9).

traditionalist buildings, including "opulent fitted and decorated country houses, blocks of flats, banks and other offices,"[18] until he left Germany in 1933 [6].

As Zukowsky has shown, German architecture of the 1920s and early 30s had many faces.[19] It is important to remember that of all designs produced during the period, those which conform to the definition of the International Style as given by Hitchcock and Johnson form only a small percentage compared to other stylistic directions. The above paragraphs have also indicated that fewer architects from Germany who emigrated to Britain after 1933 were as committed to modernism than is generally assumed. Although most of them had at some point experimented with the modernist idiom, these excursions often still stood with one foot in tradition, or alternatively were applied superficially, for reasons of architectural fashion. Some émigrés who had recently 'converted' to modernism therefore had little problem returning to a less radical stylistic approach when the difficult situation in inter-war Britain seemed to demand it, as we shall see in the following chapters. Thus two premises need to be kept in mind for the rest of this study. Firstly, all émigré architects from Germany were familiar with the new architecture: they had seen the style being developed, had been exposed to the propaganda and had been taught the techniques of modern construction.[20] Secondly, however, although the majority of the future émigrés had experimented with the new forms at some point before 1933, they were not all modernists. Hence the tendency for an exclusive equation of German architects with architectural modernism is unfounded and will be

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[18] Heinz Reifenberg, Curriculum Vitae, no date, Refugee Committee Papers (RCP) at the Royal Institute of British Architects Archives (RIBAA) , Box 1/4. See also *Wasmuth's Monatshefte*, 1930, pp.367-370 for two country houses in Berlin-Grunewald.
[19] See Zukowsky, *The Many Faces*

challenged further in later chapters. How the stylistic liberalism of the Weimar Republic and the culture with which the German architects were familiar compares with the architectural situation they entered on emigrating to Britain will be explored in Chapter 2.a.

At this point it is necessary to turn to politics. As a product of the Weimar Republic the new architecture was unmistakably left-wing in its political leanings. Many of the characteristics which underlie *Neues Bauen* were closely tied to socio-political issues: the concern for adequate housing for the masses reflects socialist ideas, group activity shows a tendency to collectivism or communism, collaboration across borders represents internationalism. As a result, the visual forms of German modernism became associated with left-wing ideology.[21] Ironically, any engagement with the stylistic vocabulary of modernism, however superficial and lacking engagement with underlying principles and politics, was interpreted as a political statement by those who disliked the modern movement in architecture. Such an equation of architectural style with politics formed the ideological basis for a right-wing backlash against modernism.

It must not be assumed that the defamation of modernist architecture occurred suddenly with Hitler's ascent to power in 1933. On the contrary, as has been established, the Nazis' attitude to architecture was founded on pre-existing reactionary elements. What began as a low-key criticism from traditionalists

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[20] There was a strong emphasis on technical aspects in German architectural education. See Chapter 2.a.

[21] However, that these associations with left-wing politics are not inherent in the style itself, but arbitrary and wholly dependent on the historical context, is illustrated by the example of Italy, where shortly afterwards the same modern forms were adopted by the state and loaded with right-wing, nationalist values.

concerned with *Heimatschutz*,[22] soon descended into a more violent and irrational battle against the modern movement, led by activists such as Högg, Nonn, and Paul Schultze-Naumburg. Their belief in the superiority of the 'Nordic' German tradition,[23] coupled with Darré's anti-urban, anti-Semitic *Blut und Boden* theories[24] and von Senger's ideas on "architectural bolshevism",[25] laid the foundations for the racist concept of 'degenerate art' which formed the ideological core of new propaganda organisations such as Der Block and the Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur.[26]

Thus when Hitler took over in 1933, pre-existing anti-modernist elements enabled him to act swiftly. Despite a basically ambiguous attitude towards modern forms and construction,[27] official Nazi propaganda thus continued to denounce modern architecture as 'architectural bolshevism'. The Bauhaus, as "one of the most prominent centres of the Jewish-Marxist art programme",[28] was closed down shortly after Hitler's take-over, the Ring was smashed and most of its members, as well as other modernists, dismissed from public and academic

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[22] As first articulated comprehensively in Paul Schultze-Naumburg's *ABC des Bauens* of 1926. Much of the discussion was centred around the flat roof, the question of standardisation and the use of modern materials. *Heimatschutz* activists regarded the new style as quintessentially un-German and a threat to national craft and building traditions.

[23] Schultze-Naumburg's popular books *Kunst und Rasse* (1928) and *Das Gesicht des Deutschen Hauses* (1929), for instance, asserted such ideas and underlined the dangers of 'foreign' (i.e. oriental, 'negro'...) influx.

[24] 'Blood and soil', after Richard Walter Darré, *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden* (Munich, 1930)

[25] See Alexander von Senger, *Krisis der Architektur* (Zurich, 1928) and *Die Brandfackel Moskaus* (Zurich, 1931)

[26] The Kampfbund, founded 1928, provided a direct link to the NSDAP via Alfred Rosenberg, who, writing in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, made the fight against 'cultural bolshevism' a central part of early party propaganda. In 1932, the founding of another group, the Kampfbund deutscher Architekten und Ingenieure (KDAI) directed attention even more closely towards architecture.

[27] Despite denouncing it publicly, the Nazi regime employed modernist architecture for functional buildings wherever it saw fit. Thus, paradoxically, some airport buildings, factories and warehouses built between 1933 and 1945 in Germany closely follow the canon of the 'International Style'. The ambiguous attitude of the National Socialist state towards all things modern, and the discrepancies between propaganda and reality, are convincingly explored in Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism* (Cambridge, 1984).

posts they had held.[29] Simultaneously, the Nazis launched their own architectural counter-programme, which involved the establishment of a hierarchy of styles and the return to traditional forms. At the top of the hierarchy stood a grand neo-Classicism of simplified forms, gigantic proportions and blandly repetitive designs, practised by state architects such as Troost and Speer in Germany's larger cities, while domestic architecture, at the lower end of the scale, mainly confined itself to a *Heimatstil* which imitated local traditions.[30] In many cities re-building programmes were launched. These usually involved not only drastic town-planning measures, such as the creation of the notorious gigantic straight axes, but also the 'beautification' of any existing structure regarded as unsuitable or un-German.[31] In this context, a number of buildings in modernist style, including some works by architects featuring in this study, were destroyed[32] or remodelled in order to make them more acceptable to official policies.

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[28] As it was described in a local newspaper that year. Quoted in Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics*, p.171

[29] In Berlin, for instance, Martin Wagner and all his associates were dismissed from their public posts, in Frankfurt Martin Elsaesser was discharged, Ernst Wichert, a supporter of May, lost his job as director of the School of Arts and Crafts in Frankfurt and Adolf Rading and Hans Scharoun were dismissed from their posts at the art academy in Breslau. Others who fell victim of this purge included Walter Curt Behrendt, Johannes Göderitz and Konrad Rühl. See Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics*, pp.172-3

[30] There is an abundance of material published on architecture in Fascist Germany, much of which is listed in the bibliography of this thesis. Barbara Miller Lane's *Architecture and Politics* still offers the best introductory overview, and the preface to the 1985 edition of her book includes a helpful list of publications on the topic up to 1984. For a specific discussion of stylistic hierarchies in Nazi architecture see Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus - Bayern, 1933-1945*, exhibition catalogue (Munich, 1993) and his essay "A Hierarchy of Styles", in D. Ades et. al. (eds.), *Art and Power. Europe under the Dictators*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1995).

[31] For an example of architectural 'beautification' as part of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme see my "Provincial Pretensions: Architecture and Town-Planning in the *Gau*-capital Koblenz, 1933-45", in *Architectural History,* Vol.40, 1997, pp.241-265. For attitudes to town planning in National Socialist Germany see especially Jost Dülffer et. al., *Hitler's Städte - Baupolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne, 1978).

[32] Many modernist buildings were vandalised and/or burnt down by an angry mob alongside the many synagogues and other Jewish property destroyed during the *Kristallnacht* rising in 1938. Erich Mendelsohn's Jewish Youth Centre in Essen, for example, was burnt down during the *Kristallnacht.*

An interesting example of what such 'beautification' comprised in Nazi Germany can be found in the German work of Hans Jaretzki, a Jewish architect who emigrated to England in 1933. Comparing Wiener and Jaretzki's Osram House in Berlin, a building for commercial and office use, in its original (pre-1933) form [7a] and altered state [7b],[33] one can see how the basic structure of the steel-framed building was retained, but its modernist elevations were replaced with a flat, faintly classicising façade. The windows in the 'corrected' design are of uniform size and spaced at regular intervals, some joined together with decorative plaster panels to create a vertical, symmetrical emphasis on the main façade. The shops on the ground floor of the original building, together with their advertising features, have disappeared and been replaced by a rusticated base without apparent commercial use. Examples like the transformation of the Osram House demonstrate not only the strength of anti-modernist feelings in Nazi Germany, but also the degree to which architecture was used as a surface upon which to project ideological values; as such they add to our understanding of the architectural climate in National Socialist Germany and the reasons why many architects needed to escape it.

However, had architectural victimisation in National Socialist Germany stopped with a backlash against modernism the number of individuals to be examined in this study would be tiny. The majority of architects who emigrated to Britain were not forced to leave Germany because they were modernists, but because they were Jewish or in other ways regarded as 'enemies of the Reich' in the political

[33] Eve Haas, daughter of Hans Jaretzki, kindly provided me with information about the Osram Haus and with illustrations of its state before and after alteration.

sense.[34] (It is for this reason that the resulting group of émigré architects in Britain are a such a 'mixed bag', including not only modernists, but individuals of various backgrounds and architectural ideas.) Architectural practice, like any other sphere of German life, was subjected to the processes of *Gleichschaltung*, that is the systematic seizure of control over all public, professional and cultural bodies through the party. Thus reorganised and infused with National Socialist ideology, official bodies became instruments for the realisation of right-wing, anti-Semitic propaganda: Jews, as well as other 'undesirable' individuals, were systematically isolated in all aspects of life.[35] For architects, *Gleichschaltung* quickly showed its effect in 1933. National Socialists were installed in the leadership of existing architectural organisations, including the Werkbund and the Bund Deutscher Architekten (BDA), and their predecessors dismissed. The Bavarian Nazi Eugen Hönig took over the BDA as early as March 1933, and soon after became president of the Reichskammer der bildenden Künste, the visual arts branch of the Reichskulturkammer (the central government body controlling all cultural activity)[36] into which all other organisations were eventually merged. During 1934, membership of the Kulturkammer - which was refused to those with Jewish or 'Marxist' connections - was made a compulsory prerequisite for permission to engage in any cultural activity, including the practice of architecture. Thus step by step Goebbels' demand that "Jews, non-Aryans and those related to Jews who are still members of the

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[34] This included individuals of Jewish ancestry, with Jewish spouses or other Jewish relations, of left-wing political leanings or of 'foreign' origin (i.e. not born in Germany), as well as gypsies, gays and disabled people.

[35] For a general account of this see especially G. Grimm, *Der Nationalsozialismus: Programm und Verwirklichung* (Munich, 1981). For architecture see e.g. U. Kuder (ed.), *Architektur und Ingenieurswesen zur Zeit der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft* (Berlin, 1997). For other specific aspects see e.g. A. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music, Theatre and the Visual Arts* (Chapel Hill & London, 1993) and K. H. Jarausch, *The Unfree Professions: German Lawyers, Teachers and Engineers 1900-1950* (Oxford, 1990).

Reichskulturkammer are to be gradually eliminated; new members are not to be admitted in principle."[37] was realised. Reinforced by the anti-Semitic Nuremberg laws of 1935, the sporadic dismissals and screenings of the early years soon culminated in a systematic mass exclusion of all 'non-Aryans' from architectural practice as well as architectural education.[38] In 1938, with a final tightening of anti-Semitic legislation, even the last of Jewish architects still in practice were expelled, dismissed and often persecuted.[39] Among those who had managed to remain in work until 1938, but were caught in the final round of 'cleansing' were Bruno Ahrends, a Jewish-born Christian from Berlin, and Felix Ascher, a Jewish architect in Hamburg. In February 1938 Ascher described his position to his cousin Gertrud Bing at the London Warburg Institute:"... my situation has worsened because the company I worked for now saw itself forced to dissolve the contract with me immediately. ..., the time has now come to look for new opportunities."[40] A few months later Ascher emigrated to England.

Whether Jewish architects were affected by anti-Semitic screening at an earlier or later stage depended on many factors, including their local and national reputation, the strength of their religious and political engagement, and the

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[36] Established in November 1933 as a branch of Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry.
[37] Quoted in Steinweis, *Art, Ideology and Economics*, p.111
[38] Two examples of those caught in the systematic exclusion of these years were Carlludwig Franck, who was forbidden to practice in 1937 on the grounds that his wife was Jewish and that he himself was not a Nazi-supporter, and Marianne Löhnberg, who in 1935 was dismissed from her first job after two weeks because her employer, a building contractor called Erich Kleemann, had "been told you must not work here." (See Marianne Walter, *The Poison Seed* (Lewes, 1992), pp. 201 ff.
[39] This development is reflected in the sharp increase of architects applying for residence or work permits in Britain after 1938, as documented in the papers of the Refugee Committee of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) (see 1.b.). The Refugee Committee of the RIBA was founded at the beginning of 1939 as a response to precisely this increase. Of the individuals whose applications are amongst the papers of the Refugee Committee, the majority were Jewish and still in Germany at the time of application.
[40] Letter Felix Ascher to Gertrud Bing, Feb. 20th, 1938, in German, Warburg Institute Archives (WIA), Institute Correspondence (IC). It is not clear who his employer was after 1933.

location of their practice.[41] In most cases, however, expulsion was not in any way dependent on the architectural style in which the architects practised before 1933, but based purely on political convictions, motivated by the ultimate aim of the 'racial purification' of Germany through the elimination of Jews from professional and public life. The predominance of the racial-political motivation over the architectural-stylistic one is particularly evident from the fact that architectural students - whose style had not yet matured - were expelled from architectural institutions if they had any Jewish connections. Thus Peter Moro, at Berlin's *Technische Hochschule (TH)* was summoned before a delegation of university and Nazi representatives in 1934 to be told he had to leave the university because he had (unknowingly) failed to declare that one of his grandmothers was born Jewish.[42] And Marianne Löhnberg (later M. Walter) recalls how in 1935, when she graduated, all but two Jewish students, herself and another woman, had been forced to leave the architecture department of the *TH* Berlin Charlottenburg. She herself had experienced increasing hostility and discrimination at the university, had lost her scholarship because she was Jewish and had scarcely been able to finish her degree.[43]

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[41] Systematic screenings, as well as most other practical reinforcements of anti-Semitic legislation, were usually initiated and concentrated in Berlin, and often took a long time to reach other cities, towns and provincial areas. Architects in Hamburg, for instance, seem to have been affected by anti-Semitic purges both later and to a slightly lesser degree (at least until 1937-8) than architects in Berlin, as the examples of the Jewish Hamburg architects Bernd Engel and Felix Ascher demonstrate. This is also confirmed by Mrs Engel, who experienced the early years of the Nazi regime with her husband, finally emigrating with him to England in 1935. (Conversation with the author, Oct. 7th, 1997.)

[42] He himself and his parents were Catholics. Although given the option of being recommended to another university, Moro chose to leave Germany. He completed his studies in Zurich and came to England in 1936. (Interview with the author, June 13th, 1996.)

[43] She had been able to avoid expulsion only because her father had been a Major and doctor in the army during the first World War, and because Professor Poelzig vouched for her on at least one occasion. She also recalls how at her viva the examiner tried very hard to make her fail the exam, but failed to do so and had to pass her with a second class degree instead. See Walter, *The Poison Seed*

The effect of anti-Semitic legislation in architecture and other professions was not only one of social marginalisation, but also, and especially, one of economic deprivation. One by one, all avenues of employment were closed to Jewish architects, thus robbing them of a means to support themselves and their families.[44] Many held out, hoping for a relaxation of the law and better times, but sooner or later (at the latest in 1938) they realised the seriousness of the situation. During the last years before the war, when deportations became more comprehensive, emigration (by then extremely difficult) was often a matter of life or death; but in the early years of Hitler's rule economic factors still played an important role in many architects' decision to leave Germany. Although political persecution, or the threat of it, was always at the top of the list of Jewish architects' reasons for emigration, the hope for the improvement of a hopeless economic situation, to find work and start a new life in another country, also featured on the list.

Economic factors become still more important when considering events before 1933: during 1929 to 1933, affected by the world crisis, Germany was experiencing severe economic depression and unemployment, which hit architects hard. Private commissions dried up and the municipalities, which up to about 1930 had been major employers, found themselves largely unable to finance further projects. Bruno Ahrends, for example, head of a very busy Berlin practice specialising in modernist housing design in the 1920s, suddenly found himself out of demand: "1929. The world-crisis stopped the German dwelling

[44] For this see especially A. Barkhai, *From Boycott to Annihilation. The Economic Struggle of German Jews 1933-1945* (Hanover & London, 1989).

building."[45] While Ahrends coped by diverting his skills to agricultural buildings, others went outside Germany to avoid impending unemployment. The best-known example was Ernst May and his group (which later included Eugen Kaufmann), who went to the Soviet Union in 1930 in the (illusory) hope of large-scale planning commissions. Meanwhile in Germany, conditions worsened, and even the most established and well-connected architects, such as Mendelsohn or Gutkind, found themselves struggling for work after 1930.[46] Then, with Hitler's take-over, which conveniently coincided with a general recovery of the world economy, Germany's economic situation improved quickly and the ailing building industry was revived.[47] However, while in theory this meant a rapid improvement in working conditions for architects, in practice only those who conformed to Nazi political and cultural policies could profit from it. In other words, while 'Aryan' architects were likely to see their economic situation improving steadily from 1933, Jewish architects and those labelled as 'architectural Bolshevists' experienced increasing marginalisation. Having already suffered economically during the pre-'33 slump, their motivation to emigrate increased when they found themselves excluded from the opportunity to work after 1933. A letter written to the RIBA by the architect Ella Briggs in spring 1936 demonstrates the desperate situation confronting many architects:

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[45] As stated in his *curriculum vitae* of 1940, enclosed in: letter Bruno Ahrends to F. R. S. Yorke, Feb. 19th, 1940, British Architectural Library (BAL) YoF/1/12.

[46] Erich Mendelsohn had run a very busy practice until the turn of the decade, executing a large number of large-scale projects. However, with the slump, two big projects he had been working on in 1930/31, the Berlin Passenger Transport Building and the Alexanderplatz scheme, were cancelled due to lack of funds.

[47] During the first two years, the Nazi government launched several measures to combat unemployment and inflation. Unemployment, which by 1932/3 had risen to over 6 million, was reduced through work creation schemes, such as the building of the *Autobahnen,* and later rearmament. The new re-inflationary economic policy was manifold, but had at its heart a concentration upon agriculture as well as the centralised control of labour.

...it is impossible to find any work here [in Germany and Austria]. Could you not give me work...? Rather than do nothing at all ... I should be glad to do even draughtsman's work. As I never worked in England I should be willing to work for any amount, no matter how little it would be... [48]

However, while stressing the significance of economic factors among the origins of emigration, and while pointing out that Nazi tactics of economic isolation were also applied to certain 'Aryan' architects, it should be remembered that for most 'Aryans' there was an element of choice involved, while for Jewish architects there was not. The majority of architects of 'Aryan' ancestry who had previously engaged in modernist architecture quickly conformed with the new rules and requirements after 1933, were thus tolerated by the Nazi regime and never left Germany. Most, including surprisingly some former Bauhaus members and architects who had returned to Germany after working in Socialist Russia with May or Meyer, sooner or later succeeded in finding work under National Socialism; some even gained public positions.[49] Other 'Aryan' modernists tried the conciliatory approach: unable to accept that their architecture was branded as 'un-German', they tried to 'sell' it to the new regime by stressing its quintessentially German nature. Especially during 1933-34, many, including the former Bauhaus directors Mies van der Rohe and Gropius, strove to reconcile

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[48] Quoted in Leslie Humm Cormier, *Walter Gropius: Émigré Architect. Works and Refuge - England and America in the 30s*, PhD thesis, Brown University, 1986, p.69. Briggs' letter is by no means an isolated case.

[49] For biographical continuities see Werner Durth, *Deutsche Architekten - Biographische Verflechtungen 1900-1970* (Braunschweig, 1986) and Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus, zwischen Anbiederung und Verfolgung* (Munich, 1993). Those who found employment in Nazi Germany naturally had to compromise much of their previous stylistic convictions, unless they could find work in industrial architecture or design. Probably the largest single source of employment for ex-modernists in Germany was Herbert Rimpl's office for the 'Reichswerke Herrmann Göring' (see Nerdinger, *Bauhaus-Moderne im Nationalsozialismus*, p.172). It may also be noted here that a number of previous practitioners of Neues Bauen openly subscribed to National Socialist politics after 1933.

architectural modernism with National Socialist politics.[50] Thus a number of ex-Bauhaus members and other modernist architects participated in the Reichsbank competition of 1933, the 1934 'Häuser der Arbeit' competition and the 1934 Berlin exhibition 'Deutsches Volk - Deutsche Arbeit'.[51] Both Mies and Gropius participated in each of those events. Yet these architects soon had to accept the fruitlessness of such efforts. The new regime retained its preference for traditionalist architecture, particularly for public projects, and the work opportunities for modernists remained limited. Therefore, when Gropius and Mies did finally leave Germany (Mies to the USA in 1938, Gropius to England in 1934), they did so not because they had been forced out, but because they chose to do so, motivated less by political adversity than by the fact that their economic situation had become too desperate to stay.

Thus Gropius had been complaining about lack of work for many months before his emigration. The economic depression had affected his practice badly,[52] and he was getting increasingly desperate for work, as documented in his letters of the period. In January 1933 he wrote to Döcker: "For me, too, things are going very badly. Apart from some work for the Adlerwerke for cars, I have nothing to

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[50] Those who, at least initially, believed in the possibility of establishing modernism as a National art (as it occurred under Italian Fascism) included Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Elsässer, Häring and Mächler. (See ibid., p.154.) Throughout his years in Nazi Germany, Gropius repeatedly tried to defend the new architecture and the Bauhaus against right-wing attacks by pointing out its 'Germanness'. He corresponded extensively on the matter with Hönig, president of the Reichskammer für bildende Künste. (See Gropius Nachlaß (GN) at the Bauhaus Archive (BHA), 13/1-110.)

[51] For modernist architects' participation in architectural competitions during the Third Reich see Winfried Nerdinger, "Versuchung und Dilemma der Avantgarde im Spiegel der Architekturwettbewerbe 1933-35", in Hartmut Frank (ed.), *Faschistische Architekturen* (Hamburg, 1985), pp.65-87.

[52] In fact, during the years of 1930-33 Gropius had become so desperate for work that he not only had to take on a number of very small-scale jobs, including a glass veranda and a tiny summer hut, but he even occasionally compromised his modernist principles in order to secure commissions, as can be seen in the hip-roofed Haus Maurer in Berlin Dahlem of 1933 and other work of the period. See Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius* (Berlin, 1985), pp. 178-183 etc.

do whatsoever, and it has been like this for a long time... I am running around trying to find work." And six months later: "Nothing new about work. It is beginning to get hairy."[53] That economic factors, coupled with the architect's desire to return to a position of fame and recognition, played the most important part in Gropius' final decision to leave Germany is illustrated in the fact that he never publicly broke with the Nazi regime on a political level. It is well known that when Gropius left Germany in 1934 to work in England, he did so with the official permission of the Reichskulturkammer. And when working in England and America, he was, for many years, consistently reluctant to burn any bridges linking him to Germany, refusing to make any sort of political comment about events in Germany or to lend his name to any group or event which did so. The case of Gropius thus underlines the necessity to refrain from the terminology of 'exile' when referring to the émigrés as an entire group. Rather than talking about 'exile', which implies both inevitability and ideological antagonism, cases such as this are more appropriately discussed in terms of 'economic migration' - a discussion in which emigration emerges as a means to revive and improve financial and career prospects rather than to provide political refuge.[54]

Thus, when talking about the origins of architectural emigration from Germany, economic factors cannot be ignored. As has been shown, persecution on ideological grounds was, for most architects, the main motive for emigration: driven out of their country by anti-Semitic, right-wing policies, they were forced

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[53] Letters Walter Gropius to Richard Döcker in Stuttgart, Jan. 7th, 1933 and July 21st, 1933, in German, Döcker Archiv, Akademie der Künste (AdK) Berlin

[54] It should be remembered, however, that among the German architects who emigrated to Britain cases such as Gropius' were the exception to the rule; the majority of the émigrés discussed here were Jewish, and thus forced to emigrate above all by the political circumstances in Germany. It was America which received the majority of architects whose emigration was motivated more by economic than political factors, for it was here that the best

to find refuge elsewhere. Economic factors were generally linked closely with these political causes: the Third Reich deliberately induced financial hardship for Jews in all professions, including architecture. A third factor at the heart of architectural emigration, the issue of architectural style, is also closely bound up with questions of politics as well as economics. Exponents of avant-garde culture, including modernist architects, were defamed in political terms as 'cultural Bolshevists' and 'enemies of the Reich', while anti-Semitism and anti-modernism merged into a potent irrational unity. And while adherence to modernism on its own did not generally result in direct persecution, both the political and aesthetic policies of the Nazis marginalised modernists economically. The importance of economic considerations, of simple financial necessity, within the issue of architectural emigration should again be highlighted, because economic factors will feature prominently in the discussions contained in the following chapters, particularly when examining the issue of stylistic change and adaptation to British culture in the émigrés' work.

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opportunities were available, particularly for modernists, as will be discussed in the following chapters.

## 1.b. *Across the Channel*: The Reception of Émigré Architects in Britain

Before launching into a discussion of the work of German émigré architects in Britain, which forms the main part of this study, it is not merely necessary to understand the background to and reasons for their emigration. First and foremost, it is necessary to identify who and what one is dealing with when talking about architectural emigration into Britain. This chapter will therefore discuss figures and statistics, and analysis their significance. It will then describe the bureaucratic processes which architects emigrating to Britain encountered, and discuss the admission policies employed by British authorities and professional bodies, and their relationship to political events in Germany as well as Britain. While the emphasis will be upon the legislative aspects of emigration, the chapter will also look at how the émigré architects were received in Britain on a professional and socio-political level. The final question to be addressed will be why it was that émigré architects chose Britain as a country of destination. This chapter suggests that although practical and political considerations stood at the top of the list of reasons, a certain romantic and idealised vision of British architectural culture, derived from knowledge of its past achievements, also played a role in the émigrés' decision.

In his book *The Internment of Aliens* of 1940, François Lafitte summarises the situation to date regarding German-speaking refugees in Britain. He cites a total number of 74,200 'enemy aliens' (that is Germans and Austrians) present in Britain at the outbreak of the war (not including the 10,000 or more children), at

least four-fifths of them Jewish.[1] Out of these 74,200, according to Lafitte, 73,400 had appeared before British tribunals set up in 1939 to assess the 'aliens'. One piece of evidence from the tribunals' findings is of particular interest here. When registering the émigrés, the officials not only noted their gender and age, but also their profession. Thus according to their tables a total of 137 'enemy alien' architects (8 of them women) were present in Britain at the beginning of the war.[2]

The aim of this study is to flesh out our understanding of the lives, experiences and architectural contribution of the individuals which these bald statistics so intriguingly represent. My research has succeeded in uncovering the personal histories of 54 of the architects who came under the statistical scrutiny of the tribunals (see Appendix 1).[3] At first glance it might thus appear to have failed to uncover substantial numbers of Lafitte's subjects. Various reasons for this apparent discrepancy must be borne in mind. To begin with, Lafitte's figures include Germans *and* Austrians,[4] while this thesis is concerned exclusively with architects who had been part of German architectural culture before their emigration. Secondly, the tribunals' figures listed architects as émigrés regardless of whether they had been trained on the Continent or in Britain,[5] whereas the definitions used for this thesis (see Introduction) do not include those who received their architectural education and training in Britain alone.

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[1] See François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens* (London, 1940), p.37
[2] ibid., p.38. In addition, there were 115 engineers.
[3] This number, which excludes Austrians, adds around twenty new names to those identified by Charlotte Benton in *A Different World - Émigré Architects in Britain 1928-58*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1995).
[4] Some 12 Austrian émigré architects not included in this thesis are listed in the 'Biographies' section of Benton, *A Different World*
[5] This is illustrated for instance in the case of Harry Seidler, a Viennese émigré born in 1923; he had come to England in 1938, and had studied architecture at Cambridge, until he was interned in 1940. See Benton, *A Different World*, p.212.

Thirdly, the research findings presented here can not claim the comprehensiveness of a compulsory registration of 'aliens' in Britain at the outbreak of the war.[6] Lastly, and most importantly, it must be emphasised that a large proportion of the 137 architects was not admitted into Britain before 1939, after a drastic worsening of the situation in Germany and Austria had resulted in a tidal wave of emigration.[7] Of these 'late-comers', only a limited number are documented in this study, for several reasons. Few of those who arrived in 1939 were able to re-establish themselves in architectural practice before 1945. A considerable number were admitted on transit visas only, which meant they had to leave Britain within two years of their arrival, leaving them little chance to settle, let alone find work. To document the architects amongst these 'late-comers' and 'transit émigrés' might therefore be of statistical value, but of little relevance to this study, which is predominantly concerned with the actual work of émigré architects in Britain between 1933 and 1945.[8]

There was, in general, much confusion about numbers, and there is still no consensus today. Few figures on how many émigré architects were present and/or working in inter-war Britain were published before the internment

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[6] Although all efforts have been made to make the research as comprehensive as possible, inevitably there are gaps in the existing documentation. Emigré architects who may have worked/lived outside the main urban centres and/or may not have been members of a professional architectural association such as the RIBA may have eluded official documentation.

[7] The sharp increase of emigration from Germany and Austria in 1938-9 resulted from the Nazi terror acts of those years, including the *Reichskristallnacht* of November 1938 and increased deportation. The following estimated figures of Jewish emigration illustrate this point: 1933: 37,000, 1934: 23,000, 1935: 21,000, 1936: 25,000, 1937: 23,000, 1938: 40,000, 1939: 78,000. (Figures from W. Röder & H. A. Strauss (eds.), *International Biographical Dictionary of Central European Emigrés 1933-45* (Munich, New York, London, Paris, 1983).)

[8] Even if such documentation was desired here, it would be difficult to accomplish a definitive list of 'late-comers', since the sources do not always yield all the information needed. One of the most important sources here are the papers of the RIBA's Refugee Committee (RCP at RIBAA), but while these papers cite many names of architects who applied for admission in 1938-9, they do not always reveal which of these applications were actually successful. The

tribunals, and those which were in circulation appear to contradict the findings of today's research. Probably the most important official report on the situation was that published by the RIBA Refugee Committee in June 1939. Here, the Committee (whose function will be explained below) cites a figure, supplied by the Home Office, of 25 refugee architects with labour permits present in Britain in February 1939.[9] However, the research findings presented in this study, as well as the research published in 1995 by Benton,[10] indicate that this figure is almost certainly too low - even if we allow for the fact that a number of émigré architects were resident in Britain but had not yet obtained a labour permit, and for the fact that several had already re-emigrated elsewhere at that point. Contemporary observers also did not always agree with the number put forward by the Home Office: Ernst Freud, for instance, himself an émigré architect, had informed the Home Office that he knew of 37 refugee architects in Britain with labour permits.[11] But if even figures provided by what one would assume to be the most reliable authority in the matter have to be treated with caution, is it at all possible to reach a definitive figure for émigré architects in inter-war Britain? Probably not - at least not as long as there is no consensus about who should be included in the count: which nationalities, which age-groups, with or without work permit, up to which date? To avoid such confusion, I have adopted a firm set of definitions (as laid out in the Introduction) and will not attempt in this thesis a complete statistical revision of the situation.

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'late-comers' whose names are included in my list (see Appendix 1) are only those where admission into Britain is certain.

[9] "Refugees Committee: Report to the Council", in *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, June 26th, 1939, pp.826-831

[10] See Benton, *A Different World*

[11] As is evident from a hand-written note on the very letter from the Home Office which provided the Refugee Committee with the mentioned figure of 25. See letter of Feb. 23rd, 1939, RCP (RIBAA). It is not clear why Freud's information was not taken into more serious consideration.

Of the 54 architects identified during my research, not all will be discussed in detail in the thesis, for, as explained above, their late arrival or lack of success in finding work (see 2.b.) makes them of little relevance to a consideration of the impact of emigration on architectural conception. But for the purpose of an analytical overview, the following observations and figures will be based on all 54 of the émigrés cited in Appendix 1. All of them had been part of German architectural culture before emigration, and all of them had come to Britain in or after 1933, as a direct result of the National Socialist regime, for reasons of economic, cultural, racial or political marginalisation suffered in Germany. Although it has not in all cases been possible to establish with certainty whether the architects listed were of Jewish origin, it can be assumed that around 85-90% of those arriving before 1939, and nearly all of those who came during 1939-40 were Jewish or had Jewish relations. Around 70% of the émigré architects had been in independent private practice in Germany, that is a non-salaried position, for anything between 2 and 25 years prior to emigration. These individuals had first-hand experience of the independent architect's dependence upon economic circumstances, which may to an extent have prepared them for difficulties they had to face as regards obtaining commissions in Britain. The remaining 30% of the émigrés can be divided into three professional groups. Firstly, there were architects who had been employed as civil servants by state or city authorities before their emigration. Thus Georg Lesser had worked as *Regierungsbaumeister* in Berlin (1920-34), Eugen Kaufmann as *Stadtbaurat* at Frankfurt (1925-31), and Albrecht Proskauer had been junior architect to the *Preussisches Staatshochbauamt* in Berlin (1930-33). Secondly, there were those who had worked as architectural assistants or draughtsmen in Germany, most of them too young to have set up on their own before emigration. Peter

Caspari, Robert Gutmann, Hans Werner Rosenthal and Marianne Löhnberg, for instance, all born after 1906, had worked in salaried positions in private architects' offices prior to their coming to Britain. Finally, there was a small number of émigrés who had only just completed their architectural education and training and, as a result, arrived in Britain with little or no work experience, as was the case with Peter Moro and Wilhelm Viggo von Moltke. In addition, there were many architectural students who, forced to interrupt their studies in Germany, continued their architectural education in Britain, but these do not feature in this study.

Some elements of continuity are apparent when comparing the architects' situation before and after emigration. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of émigré architects had come from the German capital Berlin, and settled in London. Such preference for metropolitan areas can be explained quite simply by the fact that the capitals offered most opportunities for work of all categories, while in the case of London existing émigré networks and support organisations formed an extra incentive. Secondly, most of the architects who had been in independent practice in Germany returned to a comparable position when they came to work in Britain. Almost two-thirds of all émigrés who arrived before 1938 (in contrast to less than a tenth of those who came in or after 1938) succeeded in re-establishing themselves in practice before the war, eight of them in long-term partnership with a British architect (see 4.a.). Of the remaining one third many were either too old to start afresh or too young and inexperienced to consider private practice, while others were simply unlucky (see 2.b.). Hence far fewer German émigrés in inter-war Britain worked as salaried assistants than in independent, non-salaried positions (a situation

partially heated by admission policies, as we will see below). However, the German architects were not always sufficiently happy with the situation in Britain to remain in the country for the rest of their lives. Driven by a variety of motives, which shall be discussed in following chapters, nearly 30% re-emigrated either before or after the war in order to make yet another start elsewhere, usually in the USA.

It is interesting to see how these figures on the social and professional character of the German émigré architects as a group reflect the policies and regulations applied by British authorities for the admission of foreign architects during the period, which will be explained below.[12] Probably the first observation to be made about British entry requirements for architects is that they were (though fluctuating somewhat with political events) on the whole less than generous. Before 1939 (when the increase in applications led to much of the responsibility being devolved to the RIBA), the Home Office dealt with all applications by foreign architects seeking to emigrate to and practice in Britain. Admission - if agreed - was granted in two stages. First a residence permit was given out, which gave the architect permission to reside in Britain, then a separate application for a labour permit was considered. Friedrich Herrmann, in a letter of 1936, describes his experiences of this process:

...I have been received extraordinarily positively here. I was recommended well with the Home Office, so that I was granted a residence permit from the moment of my coming to Britain. The way it works with the labour permit is that as soon as I am settled here I will have to submit

[12] For a detailed account of bureaucratic procedures and requirements of admission see also Benton, *A Different World*, pp.48-51 and Christian Wolsdorff, "Deutsche Architekten im Exil: Erwartungen - Hoffnungen - Reaktionen", in H. Frowein (ed.), *Kunst im Exil in Großbritannien 1933-45*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1986), pp.105-110. Wolsdorff, however, appears unsure whether to regard Britain's policy regarding foreign architects as restrictive or liberal.

three letters [of recommendation] from fellow architects with the Home Office, who will then make enquiries with the RIBA whether these architects are authoritative.[13]

When referred to the RIBA, credentials would be checked by the Institute's Practice Standing Committee. However, before 1939, the Home Office did not always refer to the RIBA for an opinion, but dealt with many applications at its own discretion. As regards the conditions for admission, the Home Office initially appears to have employed no specific guidelines other than its own general policy when dealing with immigration requests from architects.[14] But during December 1933 and early 1934, criticism was voiced by the RIBA. The Institute, which obviously felt that a firmer stance on the issue of refugee architects was required, began to lobby the Home Office, as shown in a letter of December 1933 to the Ministry of Labour:

The Minister will be aware of the serious state of depression through which the building industry is still passing and the consequent lack of employment for architects..., and while my Council feel that it is up to the Minister to consider whether the architectural profession should be treated in any way different from any other profession or trade..., they are of the opinion that the admission of foreign architects should be limited to those with special qualifications who are in a position to establish themselves in independent practice.
... [The Council] would suggest that foreign architects should only be admitted on condition that they observe and conform to the terms of the Code of Professional Practice laid down by the Royal Institute.[15]

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[13] Letter Fritz (or Friedrich) Herrmann to Walter Gropius, Aug. 14th, 1936, GN (BHA) 8/242, as reprinted in C. Wolsdorff, "Deutsche Architekten im Exil...", p.109. In the letter Herrmann asked Gropius whether he could provide him with one of the three references needed.
[14] The legislation applied was that drawn up between 1905 and 1919 as a result of anti-Semitic feelings in Britain in response to waves of Jewish immigration in the 19th century and during the First World War. Thus the Aliens Restriction Acts of 1914 and 1919, which denied admission to anybody without a work permit or visible means of support, remained valid until after 1945. See Bernard Wasserstein, "The British Government and the German Immigration 1933-45", in Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Exile in Great Britain* (London & New Jersey, 1984), pp.64-5
[15] Letter Ian MacAlister, RIBA Secretary, to Ministry of Labour, Dec. 9th, 1933, as quoted in an article in *The Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, Feb. 24th, 1934, p.383

Obviously taking the RIBA's recommendations into serious consideration, the Home Office not only made acceptance of the Code a condition for admission for foreign architects, but it also began to pursue a more specific - and stricter - line with architects. Several conditions were imposed before labour permits were granted. The purpose was to ensure that foreign architects were neither a burden on the government nor taking jobs away from British architects or draughtsmen. Thus admission was often made dependent on the applicants being able to prove they could support themselves financially in Britain. This could be done either by naming a British guarantor or by proving the prospect of work. Such conditions were often extremely difficult to meet for German architects, for not only were they prevented from taking any significant sum of money out of Germany, but they rarely knew anyone in Britain who was prepared to take on full financial responsibility for them. Securing commissions in a country where one was neither resident nor known in social circles was also a tall order, unless one had the eminence of Gropius or Mendelsohn.[16] The concern about a loss of jobs for British architects also led to the rule that foreign architects should be admitted only if they were able to set up as principals in independent practice or in partnership with a British architect, that is to say as employers who would create jobs rather than as potential competitors for existing ones. As part of the same line of argument, the Home Office discouraged the admission of émigrés seeking posts as architectural assistants and only admitted a small number of younger architects (who, because of their lack of experience, were in no position to set up as principals) and those with 'special skills' as assistants (see also 2.b.). Strictness of policy also meant that

[16] This is illustrated in the case of Felix Landauer, who had been compelled to secure work for himself in Britain before being allowed into the country, a process which took several years. See Chapter 2.b.

work permits were rarely given for indefinite periods, but were generally made subject to review and renewal and could easily be cancelled when the political situation became difficult, as occurred in 1938.[17]

However, it seems that the rationale which allegedly lay behind many of these restrictions - to preclude competition with British architects and draughtsmen - was motivated more by irrational and xenophobic feelings than by a precise analysis of the labour market. Certainly in 1934 the aftermath of the great slump was still felt by architects, but by the end of that year Britain had actually entered a period of economic recovery. This had a strong impact on the building industry, which experienced boom conditions during 1935-37 (see 2.b.), resulting in a significant improvement in the employment situation for architects. The situation regarding unemployment among draughtsmen also seems to have been far less serious than was being made out officially. Thus in 1936 Ian MacAlister, then RIBA secretary, points out that "...the situation in London as regards the employment of architectural assistants has greatly improved of late. In fact, we should have difficulty in finding well-qualified assistants for members who consult our Register."[18] In 1937 Godfrey Samuel, a well-informed Anglo-Jewish architect and activist for immigrants, also confirms that "...it is simply untrue that there is at present unemployment among architectural draftsmen."[19] Nevertheless, the Home Office continued to pursue a policy based on the situation prevailing four or more years earlier.

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[17] As experienced by Wilhelm Viggo von Moltke, who had to leave Britain for Sweden in 1938 when his work permit was not renewed, and Peter Moro.
[18] Letter Ian MacAlister to Godfrey Samuel, May 7th 1936, BAL SaG 84/3
[19] Letter Godfrey Samuel to his father, July 15th 1937, enquiring about a position for Marianne Löhnberg, BAL SaG 84/1

In January 1939 the RIBA's Refugee Committee was formed. During 1938, particularly after the Austrian *Anschluß*, the enquiries and applications from foreign architects seeking refuge in Britain had increased so much that the Home Office needed help in the decision making process.[20] In June 1939, the Refugee Committee published a report in which it summarised the situation and its position on the issue.[21] The conditions of entry drawn up here in many respects echo those already practised (though often inconsistently) by the Home Office, although with the addition of some clauses designed to facilitate the 'humanitarian' admission of persecuted Jews:

> The following are the various conditions of entry into the country and the obtaining of labour permits at the present time:
>
> 1. 'Resident' and promise to try and get a job of some sort. (Very rarely granted, usually only to maltreated and imprisoned people.) No guarantor required. ...
> 2. 'Resident' permit with no work, but a guarantor, granted to persons over 60.
> 3. 'Resident' with a job of a trainee character and opportunity to go to another country. No guarantor required. Only granted to persons under 36 who are in danger.
> 4. 'Resident' and 'Labour' permit granted to persons who have an opportunity to work at a definite job. The job itself must either be a contribution to the art of this country or agreed by the appropriate professional body (e.g. RIBA). Guarantor required.
> 5. 'Transit' permit for residence,...
> 6. 'Residence' and 'Labour' permit to people with capital who are prepared to employ British assistants. ...[22]

One of the purposes of applying a strict selection process of this kind was to filter out any applicants which were not 'genuine' refugees. However, it seems the Refugee Committee used a much finer tooth comb than was strictly necessary, refusing applications not only to those not regarded as 'genuine'

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[20] Although the Refugee Committee was thus given a statutory role in the process, its role was merely to make recommendations regarding candidates' 'suitability' for labour permits; the final decisions and responsibilities still lay with the Home Office.

[21] "Refugees Committee: Report to Council", in *The Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, June 26th, 1939, pp.826-831

[22] ibid., p.828

refugees.[23] Thus according to the above report, out of 52 applicants assessed the Committee nominated only 18 to be admitted to practice in Britain. In the face of such uncompromising policy, the Committee's assertion that "the architectural profession has a moral obligation to meet the situation with maximum goodwill"[24] appears at best an exaggeration, at worst hypocritical - especially when comparing Britain's absorption of foreign architects with that of other 'safe' countries at the time.[25]

From the outset, British attitudes, both public and professional, to émigré architects had been ambiguous. Opinions oscillated between feelings of moral obligation to the refugees and the hope of benefiting the profession by securing prominent foreign architects for their own country on the one hand, and xenophobic feelings, fears of foreign competition and of adverse public reaction on the other. While the call for Britain's fulfilment of its humanitarian duty towards the refugees grew louder in the more liberal ranks of government, arguments in favour of the admission of certain foreigners into Britain were not always motivated by selfless reasoning. Thus one member of government stressed that it was

> ...of public interest to try and secure for this country prominent Jews who were being expelled from Germany and who had achieved distinction... This would not only obtain for this country the advantage of their knowledge and experience, but would also create a very favourable impression in the world, particularly if our hospitality were offered with some warmth.[26]

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[23] Werner Harting, for example, an established Berlin architect who had applied to be allowed into partnership with Oliver Bernard in Britain, assuring that he intended "to leave Germany for professional and artistic reasons... and no other," was refused admission by the RIBA. See RCP (RIBAA), letter Oliver Bernard to Home Office, Sept. 27th, 1939

[24] "Refugees Committee: Report...", p.829

[25] In 1939, the amount of foreign architects practising in Sweden, for instance, amounted to a total of around 18% of all qualified Swedish architects. See ibid.

[26] Government protocol of April 12th, 1933, quoted in A. J. Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and the Refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1973), p.73

However, given the very small number of architects who were in fact admitted - with or without a warm welcome - into Britain during the first few years following Hitler's take-over (see Appendix 1), it seems surprising to find response being registered to their presence in this early phase, let alone such outraged opinions as that voiced in 1933 (probably in response to Mendelsohn's arrival in Britain) by the British Union of Fascists:

> At a time when so many of our young and vital architects are in a desperate position, the Royal Institute of British Architects chooses to welcome alien architects in professional practice within this country... We have been affronted by the spectacle of prosperous British architects lavishing on these aliens..., encouragement which they conspicuously withhold from the younger architects of their own race...[27]

The architectural profession's response to these accusations set the tone for the way in which it was to handle the issue from this point on. Rather than treating the fascists' article for what it was, namely the unfounded and irrational opinion of an anti-Semitic splinter group which hardly deserved serious attention, it was taken very seriously. The issue was not only brought to general attention by the article being reprinted in the Architects' Journal,[28] but the RIBA even felt it necessary to defend itself by pointing out that it had only recently recommended to the Home Office that the admission of foreign architects should be subject to close scrutiny and selection (see letter by MacAlister quoted above). In doing so, the Institute conceded to the fascists' opinion, appeasing a notion which it should have decried loudly.

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[27] "Alien Architects Invade Britain", article in *Fascist Weekly,* reprinted in *Architects' Journal*, Feb. 8th, 1934, p.197
[28] ibid.

Coinciding with the economic recovery experienced in the country, the discussion about refugee architects seems to have died down between 1935 and 1937, only to become heated once more during 1938-9. A renewed fall in building activity and a rise in architectural unemployment in 1938 had led to renewed outbursts of xenophobia within the profession in the face of the increasing influx of émigrés in 1938-39:

..., a large number of our own people are without employment. ... Any addition to the number of people at present competing for work would, therefore, seriously affect our fellow countrymen. That is why architects and surveyors, while fully sympathising with their distressed fellows in other lands, are compelled to oppose their emigration to this country.
... Conditions in this country could only be worsened by an influx of fresh competitors whose willingness to work for next to nothing would, it is all too probable, be exploited... The private practitioner, too, would be likely to suffer; for cut rates and the bait of continental design would certainly attract a number of clients.[29]

Once more, the RIBA and the architectural press reacted defensively. The Refugee Committee's report of 1939 seemed to play down the issue by stressing the small numbers of those already working in Britain and those recommended for being allowed to do so in the future, while other journals did not fail to assure their readers that "the Committee's recommendations ... are by no means on the side of quixotic generosity. They favour the most careful sifting."[30] It might even be speculated that the figures provided by the Home Office (which, as discussed above, are most certainly too low) were intentionally kept low, perhaps by applying an extremely narrow definition in the count, in order to appease public and professional opinions. It was in the interest of both the Home Office and the RIBA to avoid negative reactions and not to fuel a

[29] "The Refugee Architect", in *Parthenon*, Vol.XIII, No.5, Feb., 1939, p.145
[30] "The Refugee Problem", in *The Architect and Building News*, June 6th, 1939, p.336

tendency towards hysteria, xenophobia and anti-semitism which hung in the air at the time.

However, only shortly after it had been rekindled, the discussion was cut short by the outbreak of war, which resulted in the arrest and interview of all 'enemy aliens' and the internment of large numbers. Lafitte once more provides statistics: out of a total of 73,400 'aliens' examined by the tribunals in 1940, 64,000 were classified as C, that is safe to be set free, leaving a number of 9,400 émigrés classified as A or B, that is to be interned or subjected to liberty restrictions.[31] In terms of the architects involved, out of the 137 architects Lafitte cites as having appeared before the tribunals (see above), a total of 103 (98 men and 5 women) were put in C class,[32] which leaves a number of 34 architects who were put in class A or B. Several of the German architects were interned,[33] most of them on the Isle of Man, where they participated in the many educational activities for which the camp was famous.[34]

Britain's overall response to the immigration issue was characterised by a basic inconsistency between rhetoric and reality: an attitude which resulted in what has been described as the 'policy of the half-open-door'.[35] Hence, despite the

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[31] The restrictions for class B were mainly the prohibition to leave one's place of residence, and having to report to the police every time one travelled more than five miles.
[32] See F. Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens*, p. 37
[33] Two of the Germans, Ernst Freud and Eugen Kaufmann, had become naturalised British subjects shortly before the war, which spared them internment. Erich Mendelsohn, as a third naturalised German, had already left Britain for Palestine before the outbreak of war. For names of interned individuals see Appendix 1. Internment duration varied from approximately six to 18 months.
[34] Bruno Ahrends, for example, participated in setting up the 'Hutchinson Camp University', supervising its 'cultural department'. On camp life see Michael Seyfert, "'His Majesty's Most Loyal Internees'. The Internment and Deportation of German and Austrian Refugees...", in G. Hirschfeld, *Exile in Great Britain*, pp.164ff. The camps were largely administered by internees themselves, who set up libraries, schools, universities, kindergartens, theatres, concerts, exhibitions, newspapers, etc.
[35] See Bernard Wasserstein, "The British Government...", p.79

fact that British admission policies 1933-39 were relatively generous in comparison to most other countries,[36] "British immigration policy on the whole," as Wasserstein has put it, "must be seen as an alloy of xenophobic restrictionism and the liberal hospitality tradition (at different periods) in British politics."[37] As we have seen above, this contradictory attitude is reflected in architectural emigration: on the one hand, the British profession emphasised its "moral obligation" to offer hospitality to foreign architects, while on the other it applied strictly selective admission procedures. It is interesting to point out here that this dichotomy between rhetoric and reality also became characteristic of certain architects' reception within the profession, as will be seen during the later examination of the experience of Gropius and Mendelsohn in Britain. These renowned modernists were offered the warmest professional welcome by British architects, who campaigned for their admission to Britain and felt obliged to provide a platform for their ideas through lectures, meetings and publications. But, as we shall see, all appreciation of their past achievements and current visions on a theoretical level did nothing to shift the broader British antagonism towards the radicalism of their ideas and resulted in a lack of challenging commissions. In fact, the discrepancy between promises, hopes and reality will emerge as a recurrent theme within the various aspects of the émigré architects' experiences in Britain.

Having established a pattern, chronology and the conditions of architectural emigration to Britain, one question remains to be asked: why did German architects choose Britain as a destination? The answer to this question is multi-

[36] There were for instance no quota restrictions on the number of émigrés admitted, as there were in the USA. Of the total of around 300.000 émigrés who fled Germany between 1933-41, Britain received a total of around 10 to 15%. See Hirschfeld, *Exile in Great Britain*.

faceted. To begin with, there were political reasons. There existed in Europe certain Anglophile tendencies which saw England as the cradle of democracy and a haven for free thinkers.[38] Such positive prejudices about British liberalism, which had attracted politically or intellectually persecuted individuals to its shores in the past, were still at work in the 1930s. Only by then the attraction had become less a matter of choice for German émigrés but of necessity, for the island offered one of the few safe shores in a Europe increasingly haunted by political upheavals. For many, Britain had not been their first stop in the voyage of emigration, but their second or third. Initially, mainland countries such as Holland, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Spain had been more popular destinations for Germans fleeing Hitler's regime. This is illustrated in the cases of Bruno Ahrends, Friedrich Marcus, Erwin Gutkind, Wilhelm Kretchmer, Edgar Hönig and Walter Segal, all of whom had tried to settle in France, Italy and/or Spain prior to their emigration to Britain (see Appendix 1). However, Italy (which may have appealed to some because its government supported modern architecture) had strong anti-Semitic elements, Spain plunged into Civil War, and in France hostility towards German émigrés, reflected in a harsh immigration policy (which prevented most émigrés from working), increased as political relations with Germany worsened. Rudolf Fränkel also had not come to Britain from Germany, but from Romania, which he had been forced to flee when the Nazis began to infiltrate it in 1937.

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[37] Wasserstein, "The British Government...", p.79

[38] As Ian Buruma has pointed out, such Anglophilia (sparked off by Voltaire's bestseller *Letters on England*) existed in Europe since the 18th century and has captured individuals such as Karl Marx, Giuseppe Mazzini, Theodor Herzl and Nikolaus Pevsner, all of whom found refuge in England. See Ian Buruma's anecdotal account: *Voltaire's Coconuts, Or: Anglomania in Europe* (London, 1998)

Regarding politics, however, it needs to be pointed out that while its democratic tradition made Britain a safe haven for architects who were reluctant to abandon Europe altogether, it attracted few architects of strong left-wing political convictions to its shores. With very few exceptions,[39] liberal, unadventurous Britain held no attraction for radically politicised architects, of which Germany had generated many in the 1920s. Of the large contingent of German architects who had gone to work in Russia in the early 1930s, for instance, only Kaufmann (who, incidentally, held less than radical political beliefs) ended up in England. Those whose socialist beliefs were strong enough to have survived the Russian disappointments, such as Hannes Meyer, frequently headed for South America instead.[40]

Other architects came to Britain as a second choice not so much for political reasons, but economic or personal ones. Thus the German-Jewish architects Hans Werner Rosenthal, Harry Rosenthal and Heinz Reifenberg had originally emigrated to Palestine for ideological reasons, but ill health or professional disappointment soon made them abandon their idealism and re-emigrate to Britain.[41] In general, practical considerations were often important reasons for architects' decision to emigrate to Britain, whether as first or second choice. Several of the German architects had some connection with England which influenced their decision in its favour. Family contacts could be one such factor,

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[39] Perhaps the only notable exception is Arthur Korn, a committed Socialist all his life. His interest in Communism had led him on a long visit to Russia in the early 1930s. Significantly, in Britain he embarked on a career in teaching, where he could spread his leftist architectural ideas without dependency on commissions. Other exceptions can only be found among other nationalities, as in the case of Berthold Lubetkin.

[40] It is interesting to note that Alfred Gellhorn, who had participated extensively in social housing projects in Germany, left Britain for South America in 1936, having stayed less than a year.

as is shown in the case of Fränkel, whose sister and brother-in-law were living in London at the time of his arrival, Fritz Landauer, whose son was studying in London in the 1930s, or Kaufmann, who also had relatives living in Britain. Another factor could be language: a few architects had the advantage of having learned English at an earlier point in their lives. Unlike today, knowledge of the English language was very uncommon in Germany after the First World War; the most commonly taught language at the time was French. Thus Bernd Engel and Ella Briggs had both worked in America for a while in the 1920s and therefore had fewer problems with language and imperial measurements when they came to Britain. And Kaufmann had lived in England for a while as a boy, which meant that, as he recalls, "...certain great decisions, which had to be faced... when the Nazi period came, were much easier for me to make than for many others, who did not have the benefit of becoming practically bi-lingual at boyhood."[42] Finally, for some architects, notably Mendelsohn and Gropius, their decision to emigrate to Britain had been facilitated greatly by the fact that they had British advocates who, as we shall see in later chapters, very much paved the way for their arrival.

And then there was the architectural factor. For apart from being a safe haven in political terms, Britain at the time was also emerging as one of the few safe European havens for architectural and artistic modernism. At a time when modernism was being expelled from several of its countries of origin, decried as 'bolshevist' in Germany and as 'bourgeois' in Russia, it was beginning to take

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[41] It is possible that this choice was influenced by the fact that émigré architects had made contacts with British (architectural) culture and language in Palestine (which was a British mandate).

[42] Eugen Charles Kent, *The Memoirs of Eugene Kent*, unpublished typescript, c.1978, BAL, p.22

root in Britain, as we will see in the following two chapters. Although their work was far from being universally loved or accepted, in Britain modernists did not need to fear official persecution, and could even hope for support from small sections of the profession. This was no doubt an incentive to the many German architects who had begun to pursue a modernist line in the 1920s. Thus Berthold Lubetkin, a Polish-born architect who had worked in Russia most of his life before emigrating to England in 1931, observed in 1937: "...England has become almost the only country in which modern architecture can flourish in comparative freedom. This circumstance has naturally attracted many foreign architects, fleeing from political restrictions or economic stagnation in other countries."[43] However, for many émigrés the idea of a thriving modernist scene, which had attracted them to Britain in their decision about where to emigrate, was an illusion. To what extent Britain could fulfil the expectations of those who had come in the belief that it offered plenty of opportunities for modernism will be explored in Chapters 2.a. and 2.b.

But German preconceptions about British architecture did not stop there. The picture which many Germans had of British architectural culture was very much steeped in images of the past. It was a (somewhat romantic) picture of a country admired for the development of the standardised eighteenth-century town house, for Paxton's Crystal Palace as an icon of progressive engineering and construction, and for an Arts and Crafts tradition which had given rise to Ebenezer Howard's Garden City idea. German architects, especially modernists, felt not only admiration, but also a certain debt to British architecture. In it they saw much of the origins of their own work. Nikolaus Pevsner's *Pioneers of the*

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[43] Berthold Lubetkin, "Modern Architecture in England" (1937 for *American Architect and*

*Modern Movement from William Morris to Walter Gropius* was one of the most influential texts to propose a direct line of architectural development between England and Germany, asserting that "Morris laid the foundations of the modern style; with Gropius its character was ultimately determined."[44] One of the most influential characters in British architecture for the Germans was Ebenezer Howard. He had a profound influence on German town-planners, in particular the architects of the social housing projects at Frankfurt, who believed that his writings and work at Letchworth and Welwyn had "prepared the ideas of modern rational architectural and city planning", and who saw the "idea and meaning of Howard's work" reflected in their own work.[45] The first-hand impact of English Garden City ideas on German town planning of the 1920s can also be traced in the person of Ernst May, head of the Frankfurt project: May had worked with Raymond Unwin in London in 1910-12, an experience which proved to be a life-long influence on his career.[46] Similarly, many modernists felt that their own tendencies towards rational planning and standardisation owed much to the English town house of the 18th century, in which they saw "the spirit which we should like the new movement to express."[47] Interestingly, this admiration for Georgian architecture was to express itself with some consistency in the British work of German émigré architects, as we shall see later. But more importantly

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*Architecture*), reprinted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.94 ff.

[44] Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of Modern Design* (London, 1949), p.19. Pevsner was, however, not the first to bring the idea to paper; similar observations had already been made by Bruno Taut (*Modern Architecture* (London, 1929)) and Morton Shand ("Scenario for a Human Drama", in *Architectural Review*, Aug. 1934, pp.9ff).

[45] Josef Gantner, writing on the occasion of Ebenezer Howard's death on May 1st,1928, in *Das Neue Frankfurt,* No.2, p.159, quoted in Christoph Mohr & Michael Müller, *Funktionalität und Moderne. Das Neue Frankfurt und seine Bauten 1925-1933* (Cologne, 1984), p.71. Gantner was one of the supervising architects at May's Frankfurt office. A similar view is expressed in the memoirs of E. Kaufmann (Kent), who also worked at Frankfurt.

[46] See his own recollections, as quoted in Justus Buekschmitt, *Ernst May* (Stuttgart, 1963), p.19

[47] Bruno Taut, *Modern Architecture*, p.207. This view is confirmed by Morton Shand, who believed that "There is no sort of doubt that the English urban house of 1800 was the direct prototype of the functional house of today." (see "Scenario...", p.9).

for this discussion, the feelings of admiration for and indebtedness to British architecture were possibly a crucial factor in the Germans' decision to emigrate to Britain. Although the future émigrés were aware that Britain had lagged behind in interesting architectural developments in recent years, romantic notions about past British progressiveness, and the affiliations they saw between it and their own work, perhaps led them to see a great potential in British architecture, waiting to be tapped. Whether or not Britain was ready to enter into a new phase of architectural experiment and innovation in the 1930s, and what role émigré architects played in this context, will be explored in the following chapter.

# 2. ADJUSTMENT

## 2.a. *A New Environment*: The British Architectural Scene and Its Differences to Germany

As the outline in Chapter 1.a. suggests, the Germany of the 1920s was a hothouse for new approaches to architecture in terms of design, construction and social theory. Thus the majority of German architects who later emigrated to Britain - despite the fact that they had witnessed the rise of a rigorous architectural conservatism developing hand in hand with the fascist regime - had grown up and matured in a period of progressive ideas and relative freedom. During this period, almost all of the future émigrés had at some point experimented with modernist forms, a number of them dedicating themselves to advocating and developing the principles of modernism. When the Nazi regime launched its campaign against modern architecture and installed traditionalism in its place, architectural conservatism came to stand for oppressive right-wing politics. While for most architects who left Germany emigration was a life-saving necessity, the hope of finding political as well as aesthetic freedom in the new country was an important driving factor in the process. This, combined with the positive prejudices held by many Germans about Britain, probably led many to expect a climate of cultural liberalism. However, Britain could not completely fulfil these expectations. Although a liberal democracy in the political sense, its inter-war culture was characterised by a deep-seated conservatism which was only gradually and cautiously beginning to be infiltrated with a more progressive spirit. In architecture, this conservative attitude was perhaps most pronounced. This may have come as a surprise to émigré architects, who had learned to

equate conservative architecture with reactionary politics, and democratic politics with architectural open-mindedness.

Britain's late acceptance and application of modern architecture is commonplace in the historiography of twentieth-century architecture. Nevertheless, in order to understand fully the context which the émigrés encountered in Britain, it is necessary to give a brief account here. The following paragraphs indicate the cultural background against which the British work of the émigrés must be seen, while pointing out its peculiarities and differences from Germany's architectural culture of the 1920s. The émigrés' own perception of and opinions about their new environment will also be discussed. While summarising the circumstances in which modernism was introduced into British architecture, this chapter also aims to examine the role which German émigrés played in this context. In doing so, certain preconceived notions about the Germans' influence on the course of British architecture in the 1930s will be challenged.

The period of 1933-38 in British architectural culture was marked by a tension between a widespread conservatism and the rapid dissemination of new forms and ideas. Thus the situation the émigré architects faced depended to a large extent on the year of their arrival in Britain. While those who came in 1937-8 found a country which Hitchcock described as "[leading] the world in modern architectural activity",[1] when the first Germans arrived shortly after Hitler's ascent to power, the situation had looked quite different. In 1933, one still had to look hard to discern any traces of "modern architectural activity" in Hitchcock's sense in Britain. The overwhelming impression would instead have been one of

[1] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Modern Architecture in England* (New York, 1937), p 25

a country steeped in cultural traditionalism, dominated by "very old humus which could not easily be replaced".[2] Such conservatism stemmed in part from the political situation after 1918. After the end of the First World War, Britain, as a victorious ally, had not experienced the spirit of renewal and change which had gripped the defeated Germany. Instead, much of pre-1914 British culture continued to exert a strong influence after 1918. In terms of architecture, this meant the continuing influence of what Pevsner identified as a Beaux Arts-derived 'Edwardian Imperial' style for much public architecture and vernacular traditionalism, a residue of the Arts and Crafts Movement, for private houses.[3] Additionally, modes of neo-Georgian design were beginning to gain a new widespread popularity. During the 1920s, while Germany's cultural vanguard was striving for "new form" and a "new order" without ties to past traditions[4] and developing architecture into *Neues Bauen* by around the middle of the decade (see 1.a.), Britain remained more or less stuck in the past. British architectural publications of the 1920s and early 1930s, such as Yerbury and James's *Modern English Houses and Interiors* (1925), Randal Phillipp's *The Modern House* (1927) or Frederick Chatterton's *Small Houses and Bungalows* (1932), illustrate the dominant attitude to building and style at the time. Contrary to what their titles seem to indicate, these books featured an eclectic agglomeration of buildings in a variety of historical styles (very occasionally featuring one or two buildings in the Continental modernist style), indicating how strong a grip tradition still had upon the profession.

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[2] Walter Gropius writing about Cambridge in letter to his daughter, November 1934, quoted in Reginald Isaacs, *Walter Gropius* (Berlin, 1983), p.192

[3] See Nikolaus Pevsner, "Nine Swallows No Summer", in J.M. Richards, N. Pevsner (eds.), *The Anti-Rationalists* (New York, 1973), p.203

[4] Walter Gropius writing in 1919, quoted in Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-45* (London, 1968), p.45

Although Britain saw a number of progressive movements in design and architecture in the inter-war period, these remained too closely bound up with past traditions - in particular the recent Arts and Crafts and the Garden City movements - to have any lasting impact. For instance in housing: while the 'Homes fit for Heroes' campaign (1915-21) for the erection of solid suburban houses departed from conventional working-class housing[5] by simplifying plans, reducing ornamentation and standardising components, its potential to make a significant contribution to architectural progress was undermined by the designers' attachment to Parker and Unwin's work at Letchworth Garden City. In stylistic terms, these cottage-type houses - oscillating between a picturesque Arts and Crafts idiom and neo-Georgian[6] - offered little that was new, while in demographic terms, the low density planning of these suburban estates offered no answer to the growing problem of urban slums. A similar reluctance to break with the past also characterised the efforts of the Design and Industries Association (DIA). This body, founded in 1915 in emulation of the German Werkbund, aimed at the promotion of "what is best and soundest in design" and the exploration of more logical uses of the machine.[7] Yet, echoing the controversies prevalent in the Werkbund,[8] the DIA - despite its name - was characterised by an ambivalent attitude toward industry. While it stressed the

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[5] Around ¾ million houses were erected in Britain's suburbs in the inter-war period. However, a large percentage of these were built speculatively, that is outside the Homes fit for Heroes programme. The standard type of house was a 2-storey pitched-roof cottage in a garden, usually semi-detached. See Mark Swenarton, *Homes Fit For Heroes* (London, 1981)

[6] For inter-war housing programmes and neo-Georgian architecture see Pepper & Swenarton, "Neo-Georgian maison-type", in *Architectural Review*, Aug. 1980, p.87

[7] See pamphlet manifesto "A proposal for a new body" of 1915, quoted in Nikolaus Pevsner, *Studies in Art and Architecture*, Vol. II (London, 1968), p.228. Important early members of the DIA included Harry Peach, Cecil Brewer, W. R. Lethaby and Ambrose Heal. The DIA's activities consisted mainly of holding exhibitions and lectures, producing journals, yearbooks and guides and establishing contacts with industry. See Harry Peach papers, BAL, PeH.

importance of facing up to the realities of modern industry, it simultaneously displayed a hostility towards standardisation and mass-production, as well as a continuing romanticism about the importance of individualised craftsmanship.[9] However, unlike the Werkbund, which eventually committed itself to the industrial approach, the DIA never resolved its ideological antagonisms because too many of its members held too tightly onto past traditions and a repertoire of historical (mostly Georgian) forms. However, it needs to be added that its membership also included a number of pioneers of the early British avant-garde, be it as clients (W. J. Bassett-Lowke), industrial entrepreneurs (Jack Pritchard), architects (Maxwell Fry), furniture designers (Gordon Russell) or corporate patrons (Frank Pick for London Transport). Nevertheless, despite efforts by a number of individuals, the DIA never achieved the coherence in policy and outlook which could have made it the mouthpiece for modern design which Britain would have needed badly in the 1920s and 30s.

While the persistence of conservatism during the period must be emphasised, it would be wrong to say Britain remained ignorant of modern design. The new taste for restrained, geometric forms which had gripped Europe by the mid-1920s also made an impact on Britain, where it expressed itself mainly in two directions. Firstly, the period saw the re-discovery of classical forms: façades designed in a stripped Georgian style, usually executed in traditional materials.[10]

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[8] As best represented in the Muthesius-van de Velde argument, the former advocating mass-production and standardisation, the latter individualised craft-production.

[9] Such paradoxes are illustrated in the publications of the DIA; in the 1922 *Yearbook*, for instance, illustrations of neo-Georgian furniture and buildings appeared next to automobiles and aeroplanes. See Pevsner, *Studies in Art and Architecture*

[10] This was particularly popular for public buildings, such as banks, post-offices, town halls and schools. The style was also taught at architectural schools; Liverpool School of Architecture was a particularly influential advocate of the neo-Georgian. It essentially adhered to many of the principles of the modern movement (favouring simplification, good proportion, standardisation etc.), but, basing its teachings on the classicism practised by Blomfield et. al., it

Secondly, there was the exploration of a more 'jazzy', decorative modern style derived from the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris. This inspired an architecture which used modernist forms and new materials, such as steel, glass and concrete, in a mannered, playful fashion while making free use of applied decoration. It distinguished itself from functionalist modernism not only through its commercialised decorativeness, but first and foremost through its lack of a serious, scientific approach and social idealism. (This style will be referred to by its popular shorthand term 'Art Deco' in the following discussion.[11])

Neo-classical and decorative tendencies represent a significant proto-modern streak in inter-war culture in Britain. In fact, some of the most characteristic architecture of the period emerged from a fusion of selected avant-garde elements with a variety of traditionalist sources. Thus Scott's 'classical-modern' hybrid design for Battersea Power Station (1929-34), with its decoratively detailed cuboid brick body surmounted by massive chimneys wittily disguised as giant fluted columns, has become a British icon of the period, as has the Hoover Factory (Wallis and Gilbert, 1931-32), which combines a white-rendered façade of classical, almost Palladian symmetry with decoratively coloured modern detailing. And the Royal Horticultural Hall (Hall, Easton and Robertson, 1928) exemplifies the most seamless fusion of traditional elements with up-to-date

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did not share its ideas on style. See Sharples, Powers & Shippobottom, *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture*, exhibition catalogue (Liverpool, 1996).

[11] Several terms have been coined for this French-born, proto-modern tendency in inter-war architecture, which was popular in Britain and particularly in America. Some refer to it as 'Moderne', others as 'Jazz Style' or 'Jazz Modern'. I have chosen the term 'Art Deco architecture', because I feel it is more neutral and historically correct; it reflects not only the French origins of the movement, but also the close relationship between architectural aspects and developments in the Applied Arts and in interior design. It also avoids confusion with the dogmatic, functionalist, and fiercely anti-decorative modernism referred to under the term International Style.

construction: whereas the interior proudly displays its adventurous structure in a succession of elliptic concrete arches alternating with large window spaces,[12] on the outside a neo-Georgian façade denies any such functionalist aesthetic.

The impact of modernism is also evident in the adoption of certain elements of modern architectural design for particular building types during the late 1920s and early 1930s. The fastest sector to adopt the Art Deco style was entertainment architecture. Buildings such as the Savoy Theatre in London (O. Bernard, 1932), the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon (Elisabeth Scott, c. 1932), both with lavishly ornate interiors, and the burgeoning chain of Odeon and Granada cinemas integrated contemporary forms of design with new materials and modern technology, such as electric lighting. The adoption of a selection of contemporary motifs can also be traced in domestic architecture at the time: otherwise wholly traditional suburban semis, for instance, began to feature large metal windows, rounded corners and bays, stuccoed surfaces, and front doors and gates adorned with sun-ray motifs.

This exploration of selected elements of modern design for decorative purposes did not remain unchallenged. Information about the functionalist modern movement on the Continent, particularly in Germany, France and Holland, was seeping in slowly. 1927 had seen the publication of Le Corbusier's manifesto *Vers une architecture* in English, followed by a number of publications by English authors on contemporary European architecture, including Yerbury's *Modern European Buildings* (1928) and Shand's *Modern Theatres and Cinemas* (1930). In 1932 Hitchcock and Johnson's catalogue to the New York exhibition

[12] The structure of the hall even impressed the modernist Morton Shand, who in 1929 hailed

'The International Style' provided the English reader with an overview of modernists' achievements to date. Moreover, from around 1928 architectural magazines, particularly the *Architectural Review,* the *Architects' Journal* and the *Architect and Building News,* had begun to pay attention to Continental modernism, steadily increasing their coverage of Continental buildings, publications and exhibitions.[13] British architects were thus slowly familiarised with European modernism. This provoked a variety of responses. While the majority probably regarded it as just one more fashion from Europe, some saw the stark white walls, cubic forms and flat roofs (which they identified with left-wing politics) as a major threat to their country's tradition and culture. Traditionalists and xenophobes such as Sir Reginald Blomfield, author of *Modernismus* (1934), launched a campaign to save the "great and permanent art [of] Architecture" in Britain from getting "lost in the quicksands of Bolshevism".[14] However, a small number of British architects reacted differently and began not only to emulate the Continental example in their own work, but to promote architectural modernism in their own country. Their definition of modern architecture echoed the serious, scientific approach taken a decade previously by Continental modernists such as Le Corbusier and Gropius: "The young designers in England inevitably became the emulators of an older generation already active in Germany, France and the USA."[15] Emulating the work of these modernists involved not only a deeper understanding of the principles behind modernist theories, such as the rational analysis of function, attention to

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the Horticultural Hall in his article "Salute to Adventurers", in *Architectural Review*, 1929, p.17.
[13] Multi-lingual writer Morton Shand and editor J.M. Richards occupied important roles in this dissemination process.
[14] Blomfield in *Modernismus*, quoted in C. & T. Benton (eds.), *Form and Function. A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890-1939* (London, 1975), p.175
[15] Serge Chermayeff, "An Explosive Revolution - the Architect Looks Back", in *Architectural Review,* No.166, Nov. 1979, p.309

planning and application of modern construction methods, but also suggested an identification with the reforming social purpose behind the work. Although the number of British architects who grasped these implications fully was at first limited, the number of those adopting the manner of building - the cubic, flat-roofed, white-walled idiom which was to become known in the aftermath of the 1932 exhibition as the International Style - was increasing steadily after this date. The few who by 1933 were fully committed to modernism came together to found the MARS (Modern Architectural Research) group, soon to become the British arm of CIAM (which had by then been in existence for five years). This gave the official seal to the existence of a modern movement in Britain. Including members such as Coates, Shand, Fry, Lubetkin, Connell, Ward, Lucas, Yorke, Arup and Gloag, the MARS group fiercely rejected the decorative mannerisms of Art Deco architecture,[16] feeling that "...in England at the moment ...modern architecture, even as it succeeds in gaining footing, is in danger of being swamped by loose thinking and vulgar design."[17] To avoid such a course of events, MARS aimed "to establish firmly the *order* of constructive architecture so that it serves society completely - and to raise its standards."[18] 1933 was an important year for modern architecture in Britain, because it saw the foundation not only of MARS, but also the modern practices of Lubetkin's Tecton and Connell, Ward and Lucas. As the economic depression began to lift, the number

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[16] It should, however, be remembered that decorative design in many cases paved the way in matters of taste for functionalist modernism. Early modernist houses often featured lavishly decorated interiors, as can be seen in Behrens's New Ways in Northampton (1926) and Connell's High and Over in Amersham (1929), and several modernist architects, such as Chermayeff, Emberton or Tait started their career as designers in 'Art Deco' manner.

[17] Report of MARS group at CIRPAC meeting at La Sarraz, Sept. 9th-12th, 1936, GN (BHA) 12/21. The MARS group's rejection of Art Deco modernism is also evident in the fact that Emberton was to be excluded from the group on the grounds of his design for the Olympia Exhibition Building.

[18] Maxwell Fry, "Is Modern Architecture on the Right Track?", 1933, quoted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.83

of private houses built in the new manner began to increase drastically, as did their coverage in the literature, as described by F. R. S. Yorke:

> In 1934, when *The Modern House* was first published, it was difficult to find material to fill the 14 pages of the book given to English examples. Within a little more than 2 years there were enough modern houses in this country to provide material for a double number of the *Architectural Review*, and now, within 3 years, it is possible to produce a book devoted to English houses only.[19]

Thus the establishment of what Pevsner calls "a tradition of contemporary form"[20] in Britain can be pinned to the years 1933-35 - approximately a decade after Germany and other European countries. Significantly, these dates coincide with the arrival of the first émigré architects from Germany in Britain. This chronological coincidence has led some writers to establish an exclusive causality between the two events. Lasko, for instance, has concluded that "...even in the short time [the émigré architects] spent here they introduced 'Modern Architecture', the 'International Style', to this country,"[21] while James goes so far as to claim that "the Germans transformed Britain from a conservative backwater... to one of the rare outposts... of the New Building."[22] However, such an interpretation simplifies and falsifies actual events, for it not only credits the German émigrés with more influence than they actually exerted (see also 4.b.), but it also wrongly implies that no modern architectural activity took place in Britain before 1933.

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[19] F. R. S. Yorke, *The Modern House in England* (London, 1937), p.12. This book gives the best overview of the modern architecture produced in Britain during the years 1933-37.
[20] Pevsner, "Nine Swallows No Summer", p.203. However, Pevsner dates the beginning of the development of such a tradition around the year 1928-29.
[21] Peter Lasko, "The Impact of German-Speaking Refugees in Britain on the Fine Arts", in Werner E. Mosse (ed.), *Second Chance - Two Centuries of German-Speaking Jews in the UK* (Tübingen, 1991)
[22] Kathleen James, *Erich Mendelsohn and the Architecture of German Modernism* (Cambridge, 1997), p.239

Although Summerson describes the modern movement between 1927 and 1933 as "mostly talk",[23] it was not exclusively so. Modernism had yet to find its mouthpiece in MARS, but there were already a number of British architects practising a modernism after the functionalist Continental example during this pioneering phase (identified by Gould as the 'First Movement, 1919-33'[24]). These pioneers included George Checkley, who built 'white houses' in the Cambridge area (1930 and 1932) and William Walter Wood who did the same in Devon. It further included Marshall Sisson, Colin Lucas, the New Zealander Amyas Connell, and Joseph Emberton, who deserves to be noted for his advanced use of structure and new materials, as evident in his Royal Corinthian Yacht Club (1930-31) and his Universal House in London (1933). The list of examples could be extended further, but the above suffices to illustrate that an awareness as well as application of Continental modernism existed in Britain before 1933. Each of the above architects was evidently inspired by Continental developments. Side by side with the influence of a variety of sources, including Art Deco, Dutch and Scandinavian architecture, the impact of a functionalist idiom characteristic of *Neues Bauen* may be detected. Thus the earliest impact of German modernism on British architecture clearly pre-dates the arrival of the first émigrés from Germany.

There are other reasons to beware of giving German architects too much credit for the initial dissemination of modernism in Britain. Unlike most other foreign architects, the majority of the Germans arrived after 1935, many even after

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[23] John Summerson in introduction to Trevor Dannatt, *Modern Architecture in Britain* (London, 1959), p.12

[24] Jeremy Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain, 1919-1939* (London, 1977)

1937, when the battle was already fought and Britain's modern movement already well in motion. Few German émigrés came to Britain early enough to have exerted an influence during the formative years of 1933-4 - and not all of them were modernists in the strict sense.[25] As we shall see, those who could have made the strongest impact, Mendelsohn and Gropius, were given few opportunities to build and stayed only a short time in Britain, so that their realised work amounts to less than that of any one of the British modernists.[26] Moreover, while Britain was busy adopting the cubic forms and white walls of Continental architecture of the previous decade, many of the German architects were beginning to replace this uncompromising idiom with more subdued forms, colours and materials. They began to adjust their modernist vocabulary to Britain's traditions, its natural and built environment and its conservative tastes (see 3a & b.). Some even abandoned modernist forms altogether - something which made them less than convincing promoters of modernism in the British context. Thus although the Germans contributed to the development of modernism in Britain, they did not introduce the International Style, but rather moved away from its rigorous canon. Thus while it is fair to credit the German émigrés with an important contribution to British modernism, to claim that "...the 'Modern Movement' in Britain was at that time essentially a foreign import"[27] is a significant misrepresentation of events. Much of the German architects' influence during those crucial years of 1933-34 had a spiritual or theoretical role: feeding ideas and concepts to British modernists, encouraging their efforts, sharing their past experiences in lectures, meetings and private exchange.

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[25] Mendelsohn, Kaufmann, Gropius, Freud, Jaretzki, Caspari and Proskauer all arrived during these two years.

[26] Eugen Kaufmann forms an exception here: his work of the inter-war period is fairly extensive, and he never left Britain to re-emigrate elsewhere.

Therefore, to summarise the situation in Curtis's words, "it would be wrong to see... [the émigrés'] influence as anything other than an encouragement to a movement which had its own momentum."[28]

However, in pointing out that modernist architecture began to spread in Britain between 1933 and 1937, one must not exaggerate the effect which this had on the overall cultural climate and built environment. The majority of the profession, as well as the general public and its authorities remained hugely sceptical about modern architecture. This meant that few large-scale public commissions or government-sponsored housing programmes in the new functionalist style were executed. Able to make a direct comparison between German and British cities, notably Berlin and London,[29] the émigrés were naturally struck by the limited amount of modern architectural activity in their new environment. Given that most Germans had an idea of Britain as an essentially progressive country - the home of the industrial revolution, the Crystal Palace and the Garden City Movement - the initial confrontation with its real, conservative face came as a surprise to many. Ernst Freud, for instance, commented "...it is most surprising to a continental observer how very few modern buildings are to be found and that the whole idea of modern architecture has not yet begun to influence the features of English towns."[30] Making further comparative observations between Germany and Britain, he found three major differences in which he saw the reasons for the scarcity of modern buildings in Britain: the lack of progressive

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[27] Ove Arup, "Arup Associations - The Engineer looks back", in *Architectural Review*, No.166, Nov. 1979, p.315

[28] William Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (London, 1982), p. 227

[29] The overwhelming majority of émigrés from Germany had previously practised in Berlin and settled in London on arrival in Britain.

[30] Ernst Freud, "A Foreign Architect observes England", letter to the editor, in *Design for Today*, Vol.II, No.18, Oct. 1934, pp.394-5

clients, the lack of a progressive government supporting and funding modern architecture, and the existence of a "real good tradition" in England.[31] By identifying these points, Freud simultaneously summarised some of the main hurdles émigré modernists had to overcome in their search for work in Britain, as will be explained in the following chapter.

However, when looking at the differences between Britain and other European countries, Freud's list can be extended further. Here, a 1937 article by Lubetkin, which details how "the whole architectural scene in England is fundamentally different from that of other countries",[32] is a useful source. In his article, Lubetkin bemoans the lack of interest in progressive town and country planning in Britain, which stands in contrast to the large-scale planning projects realised during the 1920s in Russia, Germany and France.[33] Another crucial peculiarity seen by Lubetkin in Britain in the 1930s is the continued existence of outmoded building legislation, which required every project to be given consent by local authorities. Since planning committees were, in his eyes, "usually opposed to architectural innovations",[34] such legislative procedures hindered the development of modern architecture considerably. Lubetkin further complains about the backwardness of British construction methods and the reluctance to introduce new methods, pointing out that "the general standard of execution and finish has become very low, and is now behind that of the rest of Europe." He could have added that the main reason for this situation lay in Britain's educational system. In particular the lack of technical knowledge among British architects can be blamed on the

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[31] It is not quite clear whether he is referring to the tradition of the Garden City or the Georgian tradition here.
[32] Berthold Lubetkin, "Modern Architecture in England" (1937 for *American Architect and Architecture*), reprinted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.95
[33] Lubetkin had visited or worked in each of these countries before settling in Britain.

neglect of constructional theory and the over-emphasis on artistic conventions, such as traditional drawing techniques, in the teaching curriculum of British architectural schools.[35] This stands in contrast to teaching methods in Continental European countries, where strong emphasis was placed on up-to-date technical knowledge in the architects' education.[36] Such a technocratic attitude is expressed for instance in the fact that in Germany architecture was for the most part taught at *Technische Hochschulen* (technical universities). Especially in Berlin, there were "a number of excellent engineers [and] the lectures on structural engineering never failed [i.e. disappointed] anyone."[37]

Another crucial difference between Germany and Britain lay in politics. As mentioned above, the political climate in 1930s Britain was far less activist and polarised, but more complacent and conservative than that of Weimar Germany. Many German architects, particularly modernists, had clear left-wing political views, which were reflected in their work.[38] Architectural groups such as the Novembergruppe or the Ring were clearly politicised avant-garde organisations,[39] many members of which had active contacts with Russia. Among the architects who emigrated to Britain, several had had strong political

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[34] ibid.
[35] For details on the state of architectural education in Britain see Alan Power's contribution in Sharples et al., *Charles Reilly*
[36] F. R. S. Yorke, for instance, who had acquired a knowledge of advanced building techniques during travels to Germany and Czechoslovakia, noted this difference and tried to combat British ignorance in his columns as the technical editor of the *Architects' Journal.* See Alan Powers, *In the Line of Development*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1992), p.12
[37] As pointed out by Walter Segal, who studied in Berlin in the 1920s. Quoted in John McKean, "Becoming an Architect in Europe between the Wars", in *Architectural History*, 1996, Vol.39, p.140
[38] Internationalism, collectivism and social concerns were among the ideas most frequently reflected in their work.
[39] These influential groups, as well as the high percentage of Germans involved in CIAM, suggest that Germans, more than other nationalities, were particularly drawn to collective work, readily prepared to subordinate their individual ideas to a common goal, style or manifesto. Complaints about the French and their unsuitability for collective work were common among

connections in their German work.[40] Yet, contrary to what one might have expected, emigration did not strengthen political activity among the German émigrés, but largely deadened it. This de-politicising effect, which stemmed in part from the contemporary political atmosphere in Britain and in part from the precarious working position of émigré architects (see 2.b.), can be traced in the group activities in which Germans participated in Britain. Thus it is interesting to note that while many of the modernists among the émigrés joined the MARS group,[41] none of them apparently got involved with the Architects and Technicians Organisation, a more radical and politicised splinter group formed by Lubetkin and other MARS members in 1935.[42] Given ATO's clear commitment to fight fascism, its rejection of architectural profiteering and concentration on social housing and town planning issues, it seems surprising that it did not attract German support. Gropius, in particular, as we will see, avoided political statements altogether after emigration; his involvement with MARS was centred mainly around "increasing [its] efficiency" as the British arm of CIAM.[43]

A general lack of activism, both in political and architectural terms, can also be detected in the Circle. The Circle was founded in 1943 as a London-based

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the German and Swiss CIAM members. (See correspondence Giedion-Gropius, GN (BHA) 12/662 etc.)

[40] Gropius and Breuer, for example, were involved with the Bauhaus, known for its left-wing orientation, Kaufmann had worked in Russia with the May group (see 3.a.iv.) and Korn was an ardent socialist who had visited Russia on several occasions. Gropius and Kaufmann had been Ring members, and Korn a member of the Novembergruppe. In addition there were several architects who privately adhered to left-wing, anti-fascist politics, but showed no direct political activism in their work.

[41] Gropius, Kaufmann, Korn, Samuely and Moro, for instance, were members of MARS.

[42] ATO was to remain the MARS group's radical counterpart and ideological foe throughout the decade. See Louise Campbell, "The MARS Group 33-39" in *The RIBA Transactions 8,* 84/85, Vol.4, No.2, pp.69-79.

[43] Letter Gropius to Wells Coates, Dec. 26th, 1935, GN (BHA) 12/616. In this letter, Gropius told Coates, then chairman of MARS, that several leading CIAM members had expressed their

"professional group of architects, engineers and planners from various countries", whose aims were

> to promote professional and social contacts amongst it s members and friends, to further and exchange professional knowledge and experience. The activities of the Circle will further include professional lectures and discussions, social meetings and the forming of groups for the study of special problems.[44]

Although the "study of special problems" was apparently aimed at,[45] little such work actually seems to have been done.[46] Instead, the Circle was first and foremost a social forum; when it tackled architectural issues, it did so informally, in friendly conversation rather than serious research.[47] A lack of interest in political or architectural activism may have stemmed from a lack of both time and interest on the part of its members, most of whom, by around 1950, were over fifty, re-established in private practice and perhaps weary of politics. Moreover, Circle members were a mixed bunch, many of whom had not engaged in radical or progressive group activities before emigrating to Britain either.

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discontent with the English group and its lack of activity. Gropius offered his advice on how to make the MARS group more efficient.

[44] From 'Rules' of the Circle; see Circle papers, BAL, C/1/1. The Circle had originally sprung out of the Free German Institute of Science and Learning (Freie Deutsche Hochschule), itself affiliated to the Free German League of Culture. See Institute's correspondence of 1943 (BAL, C/1/1). The majority of Circle members were German and Austrian émigré architects who had come to Britain during the 1930s. Much of its activity was thus conducted in German.

[45] In 1945, the Circle envisaged to form groups to tackle the issues of housing standards, prefabrication and town planning. See 1945 members' questionnaire, BAL, C/1/1. The name 'The Circle' could also reflect an initial intention to re-invigorate the work done in Germany during the Weimar Republic, in as much as it mirrors the name of the 'Ring'.

[46] Few documents of the Circle's activities exist of the years 1943-c1947, but later material does not mention any special study groups which may have existed. Certainly from around 1950, the Circle had dropped all pretence of serious architectural research and increasingly functioned as a social group only.

[47] The activities of the Circle mainly consisted of meetings at which one member or invited guest would present a talk vaguely related to architecture, planning, design or the arts in general. The topics ranged from theatre, forgery in painting, the architects' latest work, reconstruction in Germany, and the Festival of Britain to numerous travel and holiday reports. There were regular entertainment events, annual dinners and trips (called 'Circle on Wheels') within Britain and abroad.

Of course, the differences between British architecture and that on the Continent did not escape the émigrés' observation. Thus Ove Arup, the progressive Danish engineer, described his first years in Britain as a frustrating experience:

> In London I had to adjust to a completely different intellectual climate – it was like stepping 50 years back in time. ...I often felt frustrated, for only 10 per cent of the schemes I produced were built... The resistance against any kind of new idea at all was great, the bureaucratic obstructions and imbecilities were difficult to combat, and worst of all I could not complete my jobs as I wanted to because of the overriding necessity of beating your competitors on price.[48]

Among the criticisms which foreign architects made about British architecture, technical inadequacies featured most frequently. Many complained about dilettantish construction methods, the lack of central heating (which Gropius exaggeratedly alleged was "quite unknown in England"[49]) and other simple technical and sanitary features in the average home, the draughtiness of windows and doors (which the Danish architect Rasmussen ironically attributed to the English love of ventilation[50]), the thinness of walls or the visibility of drainpipes (which allegedly were a special eyesore to Bernd Engel[51]). Exasperated with building conditions in Britain, Walter Segal wondered whether "...it was worth to try [sic.] and produce architecture other than on paper under such conditions and with such rotten workmen as those in England. If one could import some ten or fifteen gifted Italians and Swiss..."[52] Another difference perceived and criticised by the Germans in particular was the lack of dynamism

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[48] Ove Arup, „Arup Associations - The Engineer looks back", in *Architectural Review*, No.166, Nov. 1979, p.315
[49] Letter Gropius to Martin Wagner, Nov. 24th, 1934, GN (BHA) 5/379
[50] Eileen S. Rasmussen, *London - Unique City* (London, 1937), p.223
[51] As recalled by his wife. Interview with the author, Oct. 7th, 1997
[52] Letter Walter Segal to Julius Posener, no date (ca.1947-9), AdK Pos-01-770

and speed in the way the British dealt with their affairs. Gropius, in particular, constantly points out in his letters of this period how much more slowly life moved in Britain, compared to Germany where one had to work under constant pressure: "The English have a lot of time, and this sometimes has the opposite effect on us as it has on them: that of increased nervous strain."[53] In general, Gropius, more than most, felt that there was a huge gulf between the Germany he had left behind and Britain, as is evident from the patronising and somewhat aloof attitude he regularly adopted when he talked about the country. This attitude, carefully concealed whenever he was to speak publicly,[54] occasionally reveals its ugly face in letters to his private friends: "...people in Germany have no idea of the ... average ignorance and artistic inability [in Britain]. A country without understanding of art!"[55] However, few émigrés were inclined to such harsh evaluations of Britain, either as regards its artistic ability or other aspects in which it differed from their home country. Most simply accepted the fact that such differences existed and that they had to make adjustments accordingly. How exactly the specifics of the situation in British architecture affected the émigrés when they came to look for work in the new country will be examined in the following chapter.

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[53] Letter Gropius to Proskauer, June 4th, 1937, GN (BHA) 39/206

[54] See for example Gropius' speech at Farewell Dinner at Trocadero, London, March 9th, 1937, GN (BHA), no item number

[55] Letter Gropius to Martin Wagner, Dec. 12th, 1934, GN (BHA) 5/367. In the original German the last sentence of the quote reads: "ein amusisches land!" He had expressed the same idea in another letter to Wagner the previous month (GN 5/379).

## 2.b. *Failure and Success*: Finding Work as an Émigré Architect in Britain

Emigration was an uprooting experience, perhaps more so than we can imagine today. Above all, it is important to remember that the difficulties faced by émigrés did not end with their arrival in the new country. For most Germans, re-establishing themselves as architects in Britain was an uphill struggle, which not everybody mastered victoriously. Hence, in order to create a more rounded picture of the realities of architectural emigration, it is essential for this study to focus not just on stories of success, but also of failure and disappointment. For this purpose this chapter will give an overview of the varied experiences of German émigré architects in Britain, aiming to demonstrate the different degrees to which they succeeded in establishing themselves as practising architects. It will look at the problems which the émigré architects faced in their search for work and commissions and discuss which options and fields of employment were open to them in Britain. Looking at the whole spectrum of the émigrés, any patterns of common experience which emerge from the evidence will be highlighted and considered in relation to the architects' background. I will attempt to establish whether certain groups of émigrés, such as older architects or 'late comers', shared common advantages or disadvantages. What emerges is that although certain patterns can be identified, the overall impression is one of extreme diversity. Acknowledging this will lead to the necessity of challenging the widespread tendency to regard the experience of a small number of prominent individuals, notably Walter Gropius and Erich Mendelsohn, as in any way typical.

While the intention in this chapter is to provide an overview of the failure and success of German architects trying to find work in Britain, it will not involve a full discussion of the work and biographical data of each individual. Such an analysis is contained in Chapters 3.a. and b., which deal with a selection of architects who successfully returned to architectural design before the Second World War.[1] This chapter will focus on the cases where émigré architects experienced not success, but a certain degree of failure. A number of contributory factors will be identified in order to establish the origins of the difficulties experienced by the architects. Here, particular attention will be given to the issue of British attitudes to architectural style and British hostility to certain forms of modernism, identifying the latter as one of the chief reasons for the rejection of many of the émigrés' projects and their resulting disappointment with Britain as a place to work. Finally, the last part of the chapter looks at the options left to émigrés determined to practice in a functionalist idiom, and the various fields of work into which they could retreat when unable to return to architectural design after emigration.

In Chapter 1.b. I have outlined the entry requirements for architects who wanted to emigrate from Germany to Britain. However, overcoming these bureaucratic hurdles was only the beginning of the struggle of finding a foothold in the new country. Although the possession of a visa and a work permit presented the first triumph for many émigrés, obtaining them did not guarantee them a livelihood. On arrival in Britain, it was up to each individual to find work. Because of the economic difficulties experienced by most, particularly Jewish architects, during

their last years in Germany (see 1.a.), many who emigrated to Britain came with great expectations and hope for a new beginning, even a better life. Often, however, such expectations were too high to be matched by reality; Britain did not offer the work opportunities many had hoped for. Walter Gropius, for instance, had hoped that after a period in Germany which he described as a "long, involuntary rest"[2] he would find ample opportunities for work in Britain, writing just before his emigration that "il y a beaucoup de travaux pour les architectes en Angleterre."[3] Similarly, Mendelsohn chose to move to Britain because he believed that "[in England] the soil is already prepared [and] promises a good harvest."[4] However, Mendelsohn was not to reap as much as he hoped on British soil. Instead, he, Gropius and many other German émigré architects were to be greatly disappointed by their British experience. The fact that an estimated thirty percent of the German architects did not stay in the country, but re-emigrated elsewhere either before or after the war, illustrates this widespread disappointment. Compared with the United States, in Britain only a very small number of émigrés achieved a position before 1950 which was comparable to (or better than) the one they had occupied during the 1920s in Germany. For the majority - especially those who had worked in private practice in Germany, and were thus used to a certain degree of independence and financial security - emigration comprised a step backwards in their careers: enforced idleness, a change of career or a drop in status. The following

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[1] Brief biographical dates of all architects, as well as a list of works of architects discussed in more detail are provided in the appendices.
[2] Quoted in Leslie Humm Cormier, *Walter Gropius: Émigré Architect. Works and Refuge - England and America in the 1930s*, PhD Thesis (Brown University, 1986), p.24
[3] In a letter to Mme de Mandrot, quoted in ibid., p.52
[4] Letter Mendelsohn an Salmann Schocken, quoted in Regina Stephan (ed.), *Erich Mendelsohn. Gebaute Welten* (Ostfildern-Ruit, 1998), p.223

examples illustrate some of the professional disappointments encountered by the émigrés.

Friedrich (later Frederick) Herrmann, for instance, felt badly victimised during his initial period in Britain. Born in 1898 the son of a wealthy and artistic family, Herrmann had established himself in a moderately successful private practice in Berlin in 1927.[5] Forced to stop working on account of being Jewish in 1935, he emigrated to Britain two years later. For around the next fifteen years, he experienced a succession of professional disappointments. In a *curriculum vitae* of 1943, seemingly written as part of a letter of complaint on being refused admission to the Register of Architects, the architect vented a series of frustrations which had built up over the years since his arrival in Britain. Pointedly stating that his "admission to the Register of Architects [had been] rejected after 1224 days (= 40 months)", he went on to complain:

> Hardly anybody could have stuck more to his chosen profession through all the years of extreme difficulties and hardship for him in Germany as a non-arian and in this country as a newcomer. And in spite of all the drawbacks he received again and again he did stay put. - But there is a limit. A limit to what a man can stand in one life and a limit for what regulations are for. ...a wise council could see that the intentions which the act stands for apply to Mr. H.'s case.[6]

He expressed his frustration about the fact that two schemes for flats which he had designed in 1938 had been turned down, and that "nobody in this country appeared interested" in the intensive study of air raid precautions and shelters

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[5] See Herrmann, F.H., *F H Herrmann, an Architect at Work 1927 to 1977*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1977).

[6] Herrmann papers, BAL, HeF/12. The whole document is written by Herrmann in third person.

he had made in preparation for coming to England.[7] It was only after 1946, the year he took the RIBA examination, that things began to improve for Herrmann. He was finally admitted to join the Institute of Registered Architects, was naturalised in 1947, became an RIBA Fellow in 1951 and set up in private practice. Ironically, in 1967 Herrmann became President of the Institute of Registered Architects.

Ella Briggs, an Austrian architect who had worked in private practice in Vienna and Berlin prior to emigration, also had to accept a reduced professional status. Educated in Vienna and Munich, and trained in the USA at the beginning of her career, Briggs entered practice in 1923.[8] Showing a pronounced interest in rational planning and mass housing, she was responsible for the design of a number of larger schemes of flats in modernist style in Vienna and Berlin between 1923 and 1934.[9] She also contributed articles to American and German architectural journals during those years. But the worsening political and economic situation in Germany cut her career short. In 1936, she had become so desperate to leave Germany that she was willing to do any work in Britain, "...even draughtsman's work, ...for any amount...," if they only let her into the country.[10] The same year she was granted a work permit and arrived in Britain. Here, she "engaged in architectural practice chiefly of a domestic

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[7] Ibid. Herrmann allegedly brought with him a "complete German architectural library on this subject."

[8] The following additions can be made to the incomplete biographical entry on Ella Briggs in Charlotte Benton's *A Different World - Émigré architects in Britain 1928-58* (London, 1995), p.146: date of birth March 5th, 1880; deceased June 20th, 1977; year of arrival in Britain 1936. See 'Candidate's Separate Statement', Briggs RIBA Nomination Papers, Licentiate, No.6228, 1947, RIBAA.

[9] E.g. the Pestalozzihof in Vienna, Döbling, of 1928 (see *Wasmuth's Monatshefte*, Vol.XII, 1928, p.72, and *Moderne Bauformen*, 1928, p.87) or the block of flats at Berlin, Mariendorf (see *Bauwelt*, No.18, 1930, pp.11-12).

[10] See letter Ella Briggs to the RIBA spring 1936. Quoted in Cormier, *Walter Gropius*, p.69.

character,"[11] mainly designing conventional houses for speculative builders until 1939, and during the war she worked as an assistant at local government offices.[12] Although her work in Britain represented an improvement on the desperate situation she had found herself in immediately prior to emigration, it nevertheless involved a significant drop in status compared with the independent and successful position she had occupied in Germany.

For the majority, emigration meant the beginning of a period of professional compromise - and for some the end of their careers as practising architects. Thus a number of architects who in Germany had achieved a relatively high profile and reputation fell into virtual oblivion after emigrating to Britain. Fritz Landauer, for example, had been a successful architect in Munich, where he had worked in private practice since 1909 and established a national reputation as a designer of synagogues. He was one of the first German architects to succeed in integrating modern rationalist principles with the formal traditions of synagogue architecture.[13] Landauer's German work also included private houses, blocks of flats, some commercial design and public works. However, Landauer's promising career was thwarted by the political and economic developments in Germany after 1930 and his ultimate emigration. For several

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[11] According to Alister G. Macdonald, who functioned as Briggs' proposer for admission to the RIBA (see Briggs Nomination Papers). On the form, the quote continues: "...in keeping with the high reputation she established before coming to [Britain]." This should not be understood as a description of her British work, but of her past achievements in support of the proposal.

[12] According to Briggs' statement in her RIBA Nomination Papers. No further details have so far come to light about which government offices Briggs worked for during the war. She may have been employed by Enfield Council, since she had her home and office in Enfield. After the war she did some work for Bilston and Holborn Borough Council.

[13] This tendency is noticeable throughout his work, beginning with his oriental-traditionalist synagogue at Augsburg of 1912-17 (which Hammer-Schenk has described as one of the most controversial synagogues built before 1918, owing to its attempted reconciliation of traditional and modern, oriental and German elements) and culminating in his synagogue-cum-community centre at Plauen of 1928-30, which consistently employs the geometric forms of *Neues Bauen* on exterior and interior. See H. Hammer-Schenk, *Die Architektur der Synagoge von 1780 bis*

years after Hitler's ascension to power, the architect tried to secure commissions in Britain on the basis of which he could apply for a visa and work permit and re-start his practice there.[14] During this long research period he lived in Munich, visited England frequently, and continued to look for work in both countries, as indicated by designs for both British and German sites made during this period.[15] Since his final emigration to Britain in 1936 or 1937 coincides roughly with the dates of two of his executed London buildings, two synagogues, it can be assumed that he decided to move on the strength of one or both of these commissions.[16] The two London synagogues, at Golders Green and Willesden Green [8, 9], are interesting because, by using facing brick on elevations and making clever use of the restricted sites, in both designs the German architect succeeded in integrating the building with its suburban English site. He successfully combined modernist elements and elements of local tradition, in the same way as he had done in his German synagogues. However, these modest jobs were to remain the only full-scale architectural projects Landauer could realise in Britain. Although he made several more designs for similar synagogues, none of them were executed. Neither were any of the numerous other projects on which he worked during the period, including a crematorium and a number of housing schemes (see Appendix 2) . And although the émigré managed to keep his head above water by designing shop

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*1933*, exhibition catalogue (Frankfurt, 1988), p.269, and Herselle Krinsky, *The Synagogues of Europe* (New York, 1985).

[14] Landauer had made first contacts with England through his son Walter, who had gone there in 1931 in order to study industrial design. This and other pieces of information on Landauer were kindly supplied by Sabine Klotz.

[15] See sketches by Landauer dated between 1933 and 1937 in the Drawings Collection of the RIBA in London (RAN 15/F-I).

[16] One of the drawings for a synagogue at Alyth Gardens, Golders Green, carries the date 1935, while the earliest date appearing on the sketches for a synagogue at Heathfield Park, Willesden Green is 1936. No doubt Landauer had received these commissions on the basis of his extensive experience with synagogue design.

fronts,[17] he never succeeded in picking up his architectural career where he had left off before emigration. After the war, by then over sixty, he founded a business for the supply and design of gravestones, but did not return to architecture.

Another successful architectural career halted by the events in Germany and emigration was that of Bruno Ahrends. Ahrends had come to England via Italy in 1939, having left behind a very busy Berlin office which handled an impressive number of modern housing schemes, private residences and other work during the 1920s.[18] Interned in 1940 on the Isle of Man, Ahrends spent his time making hypothetical designs for modernist private residences and a visionary plan for the rebuilding of Douglas, the island's capital, with the clear intention of returning to practice after his release. Unable to do so, he left England for South Africa in 1948 to live with his architect son, but died the same year. When looking at Bruno Ahrends' story, however, one has to bear in mind that, although still very active at the time, the architect was already sixty years old when he came to Britain. Because before emigration, he was not far from retirement, his career as a practising architect in Germany might well have ended soon even without the interruption of emigration.

For architects of advanced age, such as Ahrends, emigration was probably an even more uprooting and traumatic experience than for younger, more flexible

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[17] In Britain, these included façades for the Association of the General Welfare of the Blind, Burtons and Boots. Landauer senior had already had experience with modern shop design in Germany. However, the Kardomah Cafés in London and Birmingham were not designs by Fritz Landauer, as listed in Benton, *A Different World*, p.180, but by his son Walter, in collaboration with Misha Black.

[18] Among Bruno Ahrends' projects of the period were the Berlin housing schemes at Breitbachplatz in Wilmersdorf (1924-8), at Mariendorfer Damm, Tempelhof (1925-9) and in Lichtenburg (1927-8). See Benton, *A Different World*, p.137-8.

architects. This is supported by documentary evidence,[19] which shows that a greater number of older architects applied in or after 1938, suggesting a strong reluctance to leave Germany among the elderly. Because of their age, several of these architects were refused permission to enter Britain. For those who were admitted, their age often made their chances of finding work very slight. This seems to have been the case for Hans Meyer as well as Ahrends. Hans Meyer was 58 in 1939, when he applied for admission into Britain.[20] By the time that Britain had recovered from the war, he and other older émigrés lacked the time, energy and support to revive their careers as architects in Britain.[21]

Although of a younger generation, Harry Rosenthal also experienced emigration to England as a dramatic caesura in his career.[22] When Rosenthal left Germany for Palestine in 1933, he left behind a successful Berlin practice, founded in 1922 and focused largely on domestic commissions from often wealthy private clients, many of whom were members of the Jewish community in Berlin and close acquaintances of the architect. Rosenthal was a prolific and eclectic designer.[23] Yet, despite their inconsistency in style and a tendency to

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[19] See especially Refugee Committee Papers (RCP) (RIBAA) and Godfrey Samuel Papers (BAL).

[20] See RCP (RIBAA).

[21] Although this did not stop them from keeping in touch with the architectural scene. Thus Meyer appears to have been one of the most involved members of Circle, the association of German-speaking architects in England, after the war until his death in 1959.

[22] I wish to thank Sylvia Claus for providing me with material on Rosenthal. Ms. Claus has catalogued the architect's papers for the archive of the *Akademie der Künste*, Berlin, and, in 1997, was preparing a *Magisterarbeit* (MA thesis) on Rosenthal.

[23] The eclectic character of his German work can probably be ascribed to his close relationship with his clients and his readiness to respond to their wishes. Thus he designed for instance an Expressionist house with zigzag roof line (1924), a romantic thatched-roof villa (1924-5), blocks of flats of both 'luxury' and low-cost type (1926-8), traditionalist week-end houses with pitched roof and modern ones with flat roofs (1927-8) and two white-rendered, extensively glazed modernist houses in Berlin (1930-1), all within six years. See Harry Rosenthal's *curriculum vitae*, written after 1955 in English, Rosenthal papers, AdK Berlin. CV includes extensive list of the architect's work up to 1955 and references to publications of his work. See also Myra Warhaftig, "Die Künstlerhäuser des Harry Rosenthal...", in *Bauwelt,* No.40/41, 1989, p. 1962-3,

monumentalism, his projects reveal a high degree of architectural competence (evident particularly in the rational, occasionally innovative, planning), a visionary quality and a continuing interest in progressive and fashionable design [4]. Much of his work was published in contemporary German and European journals, confirming the architect's standing and promising future. From 1933, however, Rosenthal's career began to decline. At first, having settled in Palestine with an office in Haifa, things looked promising. He was not short of commissions, entered many competitions and widened his scope by doing some town-planning and teaching as well as entering new fields of design. His Palestinian work was - in keeping with the architectural and spiritual climate there at the time - more radically modernist than his German work.[24] However, Rosenthal soon grew frustrated with "restricting factors" in Palestine: "Building construction ... had to be unduly simple (lack of skilled labour); scientific side of professional knowledge was difficult to develop; political conflict curbed building; subtropical climate impaired my health."[25] He decided to emigrate to England. He arrived in December 1938, and, like many other architects, started off by doing some furniture and interior design and "small advisory jobs".[26] In 1939, he registered with the National Register of Industrial Art Designers and was interned soon afterwards. After his release, from 1940-46 he worked as senior draughtsman for K.J. & A. Sommerfeld, a steel firm, designing factories and shelters. From 1946, Rosenthal made a living by lecturing in secondary schools

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and Clemens Klemmer, "Meister der Moderne", in *Werk, Bauen und Wohnen*, No.12, 1992, p.74-6.

[24] For a brief account of Rosenthal's Palestinian work see Myra Warhaftig, *Sie legten den Grundstein. Leben und Wirken deutschsprachiger jüdischer Architekten in Palästina 1918-1948* (Berlin, 1997), p.278 ff.

[25] CV Harry Rosenthal

[26] ibid.

and occasionally designing furniture and objects,[27] until 1949 when he became assistant architect in Middlesex County Architect's Department. Since his arrival in England, the émigré had tried to register as an architect. Surprisingly, given his extensive experience and numerous recommendations from distinguished German and British architects, he was repeatedly rejected. Clearly frustrated by the fact that "owing to non-registered status as architect, scope and responsibility was restricted"[28] in his assistant post, he resigned in 1955, one and a half years before retirement age, with the intention of setting up in independent practice at last. But even in his final attempt to register with the Architects' Registration Council UK he remained unsuccessful. Between his arrival in England in 1938 and his death in 1966, Harry Rosenthal, one of the most interesting and successful architects in 1920s Berlin, was unable to resume his position as an independent architect. Rosenthal could thus be seen as the quintessential example of an architect whose career was devastated by emigration, perhaps even as a "genius oppressed by circumstances and fate."[29]

Looking at the stories of Rosenthal, Ahrends and others, it is important to keep in mind the date of their entry into Britain. As a general rule, émigré architects arriving in Britain in or after 1938 had the most difficult time trying to find work before and during the war. The sources suggest that there was a considerable number of such 'late-comers', although it is difficult to establish a precise figure (see 1.b.). In many cases the only evidence available is a name and date of application for admission, leaving the architect's activity after entry into Britain

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[27] Such as radio cabinets and clocks for 'Truvox' Ltd., modern dining room suites for J. & B. Nathan Ltd., as well as some exhibition stands. See ibid.
[28] CV Harry Rosenthal
[29] Letter Ellen Schoendorff to James Wolfson on Rosenthal's death, quoted in Benton, *A Different World*, p.207

obscure. This lack of evidence about work or employment suggests that - although there are exceptions[30] - 'late-comers' more often than not remained without architectural work between the time of their arrival and the end of the war. This applied for instance to Heinz Reifenberg, who, like Harry Rosenthal, had emigrated to Palestine in 1933 but had to move on to Britain in 1938 because of ill health, or to Friedrich Marcus, who came to Britain in 1939, having spent six years as an émigré in France and Spain. There were several reasons for the disadvantaged position of late émigrés. Above all, from 1938, with the Second World War looming, Britain's economy re-entered a difficult period during which much building activity was halted, as we shall see. Moreover, in 1938 there was a sharp increase in the influx of émigrés from all professions, including architecture (see 1.b.), which resulted in fiercer competition for the few jobs still available, further reducing the chance of late-comers to find work. Additionally, around 1938, with the threat of war hanging over Europe, the political mood in Britain became more fiercely anti-German and generally xenophobic, which also greatly reduced the chance of 'aliens' finding private commissions or any form of employment. This situation intensified with the outbreak of war, culminating in the internment of large numbers of 'enemy aliens' between 1939 and 1941. During the war, very few architects, whether British or German, were able to maintain a private practice, and instead had to apply their skills in related fields. Inevitably, therefore, the careers of many late émigrés sank in the quicksand of war and the economic difficulties which followed it. Some architects, particularly the younger ones, re-emerged after the

[30] Felix Ascher from Hamburg, for instance, had to face a few difficult months on his arrival in 1938, but by the beginning of 1939 he had established himself in a "little office" in Bexleyheath, doing some design work for a local builder. Interrupted by the outbreak of war, but probably not interned, Ascher then found a job as architectural assistant to the architect of

war, but many did not.[31] However, these 'late-comers' did not contribute to the development of British architecture during the crucial pre-war period which is the focus of the present study; they will not therefore feature in the detailed discussions in later chapters.

Before moving on to examine the experiences of earlier émigrés (that is those who arrived between 1933 and 1937), and in order to establish in what way they were at an advantage compared with later émigrés, I will briefly consider the state of the British economy in the inter-war period. Britain, like the rest of Europe, had experienced severe economic difficulties during the world crisis after the Wall Street Crash. A severe slump affected the country, which reached its climax 1930-32, leaving it suffering from unemployment and social deprivation. But from around 1933, with the revival of world economy, Britain slowly began to recover. By 1934, investors had regained financial resources and the confidence to spend; the building industry began to boom.[32] In fact, much of the general economic recovery in the 1930s was based on this building boom.[33] The 1930s not only saw a great need for housing due to a national shortage and the drive to clear the slums, but also an increase in real wages and the demand for home ownership. Homes were now cheap to build and buy: 72% of all 2.5 million unsubsidised houses built in the inter-war period were

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the Education Committee of Walthamstow in July 1941, where he kept working under F. G. Southgate until the 1950s.

[31] I do not take into account individuals who had come as émigrés from Germany during the period in question but who had received or completed their architectural education in Britain, not Germany. Such architects, though many of them successful architects of the post-war period, do not fall within my definition of 'émigré architect'. See Introduction.

[32] It grew at a speed that surpassed the growth of general business activity in the period. For 1936, for instance, Becker cites a 30% increase in employment in the building industry as compared with a 14% increase in other industries. Arthur Peter Becker, "Housing in England and Wales during the Business Depression of the 1930s", *Economic History Review*, Vol.3, No.3, p.324

erected between 1932-39.[34] However, after this period of upswing, with the worsening of the political situation in Europe and the approach of war, the tide turned again in 1938: building activity slowed down in all areas and by 1940, although re-armament and air-raid precautions kept up levels of building activity in the industrial sector, public building, housing, and the entire private sector came to a virtual standstill until after 1945.[35] With this decline in building activity in 1938 the émigrés' chances of finding work diminished. However, it must be remembered in this context that economic developments and the hardship they brought for architects - particularly during 1939-45 - affected the whole of the architectural profession in Britain and not just the émigrés. A letter from the British architect Godfrey Samuel to the émigré Erich Herrmann in 1939 illustrates this fact. He wrote: "I am sorry to hear that the house is postponed, but so many things are held up these days. We are also not as busy as we should like to be."[36]

In summary, the arrival of the first German émigrés in Britain in 1933 coincided with a general economic recovery and an unforeseen boom in the British building industry. The economic situation was to remain favourable until 1938, then began to decline. Thus for émigré architects who arrived in Britain between 1933 and 1937, the timing of emigration and economic development should in theory have worked in their favour. Given that most architects in Germany had suffered from the effects of the economic depression during the early years of

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[33] This housing boom rested mainly on the private unsubsidised building sector, which experienced an especially sharp rise between 1932-34. See H. W. Richardson & D. H. Aldcroft, *Building in the British Economy between the Wars* (London, 1968), pp.40-41 and table p.56.
[34] ibid., p.211
[35] Thus the number of housing units built in England and Wales sank from over 346,000 in 1936-7 to just under 196,000 in 1939-40. See Becker, "Housing in England...", table I, p.322
[36] Letter Godfrey Samuel to Erich Herrmann, February 10th, 1939, BAL SaG 84/1

the decade (see 1.a.), for a great number of émigrés Britain should have offered a significant improvement in their professional situation. However, the reality of the émigrés' experiences in many cases looked different. What, then, were the reasons for the difficulties and disappointments they experienced?

Much of the answer to this lies in precisely this discrepancy between theory and practice. Thus personal discontent with the situation in Britain was often the result of disappointed hopes and unfulfilled expectations. This was especially the case with architects who had experienced professional success during the 1920s in Germany, and who hoped to return to such a position in Britain. The prime examples were Mendelsohn and Gropius, whose disappointment with Britain manifested itself in their departure for Palestine and the USA after only a few years. Throughout the 1920s, Erich Mendelsohn had achieved a reputation as one of the greatest modern architects in Europe. In Germany, he had been the head of a busy, successful office.[37] Yet during the time he kept an office in England, from 1933-39, only three of his designs were realised: one seaside pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea, and two private houses (see 3.a.i.).[38] At least six of his projects for England, predominantly large-scale, remained unexecuted.[39] Although the lean years of 1931-33 in Germany should in theory have prepared him for a difficult work situation in Britain, Mendelsohn showed little patience

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[37] According to his wife Mendelsohn's practice was the largest in Germany at the time. At peak times his office contained 40 assistants. See Louise Mendelsohn, unpublished memoirs, p.179, quoted in Ita Heinze-Mühleib, *Erich Mendelsohn. Bauten und Projekte in Palästina, 1934-41* (Munich, 1986), p.20.

[38] Two more realised projects, the I.C.I. research laboratories in Manchester and the Gilbey offices in London, should also be mentioned here, but for the fact that Mendelsohn played only a minor part in their execution, which was done by his British partner, Serge Chermayeff. See Chapter 4.a.

[39] Mendelsohn's unexecuted projects are: the White City Development Scheme, a hotel complex at Blackpool and one at Southsea, a house on Frinton Park estate, a competition design for St. George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner and a house for Earl de la Warr at Beaulieu. See Appendix 2.

with it. By 1935, he evidently had already begun to lose interest in Britain: he set up a second office in Jerusalem, to which he increasingly turned most of his attention. On the one hand, the reason for this lay with the mistrust of European culture and politics in general which the architect had developed:

> ... nobody understands why, for the sake of Palestine, I dedicate only half of my energies to London... What we all have experienced since 1914 has made me extremely distrustful of Europe. I am quite unsympathetic to its over-developed civilisation and to its class structure...[40]

On the other hand, however, there was the immediate professional disappointment with Britain: Mendelsohn was frustrated by the small number and size of the commissions he received. Mendelsohn's expectations of Britain had been high for various reasons. Firstly, he thought highly of the country itself, regarding it as civilised and liberal-minded. Secondly, an architect with Mendelsohn's experience and self-confidence would quite naturally expect to be received with open arms. Initially, with the commission for the Bexhill pavilion and a generally appreciative attitude towards his persona and achievements, Britain seemed to fulfil this expectation, but the sympathetic reception was not followed by the work opportunities it seemed to promise: nobody approached him with jobs on the scale of those he had done in Germany, and few of the projects he tackled were realised (for reasons which will be examined shortly). In England, Mendelsohn felt that his career, which had been interrupted in Germany at the height of its success, was being thwarted by the lack of suitable commissions - a process which was to repeat itself in Palestine.[41] He felt he was

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[40] Letter Erich Mendelsohn to Oskar Beyer, Jan. 25th, 1936 from Jerusalem. I am grateful to Ralph Beyer (son of Oskar Beyer) for allowing me access to this letter and other material on Mendelsohn in his possession.

[41] Of Palestine, too, Mendelsohn had expected much more than he got. According to Ralph Beyer, Mendelsohn had thought of Palestine as an „option forever", but was frustrated by the fact that he was not given enough responsible, large-scale jobs. (Conversation with the author July 2nd, 1997.) R. Beyer, while editing his late father Oskar Beyer's book on Mendelsohn of

capable of far more than circumstances permitted, and he did not want to waste the creative years of his life. Thus Mendelsohn's story of repeated emigration - England, Palestine, America - reads like a continuous search for the full appreciation of his genius (in which he himself was perhaps the greatest believer). It is also a spiral of hope and disillusionment. As regards Britain, the question remains whether things would have developed more favourably for Mendelsohn had he decided to commit himself to England, a country which had honoured him with British citizenship as early as 1938.[42]

The experience of Gropius in England is in many ways comparable to that of Mendelsohn. He, too, having suffered a great deal from a lack of commissions after 1929 in Germany, came to Britain with high expectations, founded on his reputation as the founder of the Bauhaus and a member of the European architectural avant-garde at the time. He, too, left England after a short stay, departing for America in 1937, disappointed with the lack of opportunities and commissions, and the repeated cancellation of his projects. For Gropius, too, his discontent stemmed from his background, which gave him reason to believe that he was destined for greater things than those on offer in Britain. Most architects of lesser standing would probably have been content with the commissions he received. Of the projects Gropius designed for England four were realised: two private houses, a school and an industrial laboratory (see 3.a.ii.). As with Mendelsohn, all of Gropius' larger projects remained on the drawing board,

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1964, corresponded extensively with Louise Mendelsohn and Julius Posener during the 1970s. I am grateful to him for allowing me access to Louise Mendelsohn's notes on the book.

[42] Mendelsohn's naturalisation had come about as a result of the early efforts of Sir Charles Reilly, Sir Giles Scott (then president of the RIBA) and Sir Ian MacAlister (RIBA secretary), who convinced the Home Office to extend Mendelsohn's original work permit of five months to five years. After these five statutory years, Mendelsohn became a British subject in 1938. The year after, he was elected a fellow of the RIBA, despite the fact that he no longer lived in Britain. See Arnold Whittick, *Eric Mendelsohn* (London, 1956), pp.98-99.

despite the desperate efforts of patrons and other supporters to realise them. Repeated disappointments did not merely destroy his hopes in his future in Britain, but also left him in a precarious financial situation, dependent on small fees from furniture design, lecturing and shop front design, or even the charity of benevolent English supporters.[43] A situation of this kind was embarrassing and unacceptable to Gropius. Hence when Harvard University offered a job to Gropius in 1936 which at once promised financial security, better work opportunities than "stodgy, unresponsive England"[44] and recognition of his ability as a teacher and architect, he could not resist. On hearing of Gropius' departure, Henry Morris, who had commissioned Impington Village College, pointedly summed up the situation: "What a pity we had not the vision to create a big opportunity for you in England! The Americans have this vision."[45] Gropius no doubt shared Morris's feelings.

However, not all émigrés had such great expectations as Gropius and Mendelsohn. Eugen Kaufmann, for instance - although not an architect of the same standing, but nevertheless an architect of repute and years of experience in Germany and Russia[46] - seems to have been much more aware of his émigré status, displaying a good deal more humility in the assessment of his position in Britain during the period.[47] Thus it seems remarkable that Kaufmann, who had previously supervised the design of large housing schemes, was quite content

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[43] Such as the Elmhirsts at Dartington. See Chapter 3.a.ii.
[44] In Jack Pritchard's words and personal memories of the events, in "Gropius, the Bauhaus and the Future", in *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Jan. 1969, p.87
[45] Letter Henry Morris to Gropius, January 13th, 1937, GN (BHA) 39/165
[46] Kaufmann had worked with Ernst May on the celebrated housing schemes in Frankfurt. In 1931, fleeing the economic depression in Germany, he followed the May group to the USSR. However, work opportunities there became increasingly limited, and in 1933 Kaufmann came to Britain.
[47] See Eugene Charles Kent (alias Eugen Kaufmann), *The Memoirs of Eugene Kent*, unpublished typescript, c.1978, BAL

to focus most of his work in Britain around the design of shops and small houses. For Gropius or Mendelsohn this would have been unthinkable in the long term. Kaufmann's obviously lesser expectations on emigrating to Britain made him a more patient, more content, and finally more successful émigré architect,[48] who did not feel the need to emigrate to another country, but stayed in Britain until his death. It is likely that Kaufmann's unassuming and flexible attitude was partially caused by his less than encouraging experiences in Russia, which may have made him wary of over-confidence about what a foreign country could offer a German modernist. It may also have cooled down any socio-political idealism he possessed, so that on arrival in England he assumed a more pragmatic position (see 3.a.iv.).

On the whole, the individual émigré architect's expectations of Britain were very much dependent on his or her German background, age, qualification, reputation and experience. Therefore those architects who had only just begun their architectural careers at the beginning of the 1930s, such as Marianne Löhnberg, Erich Herrmann, Wilhelm Viggo von Moltke, Gerhard Rosenberg[49] or Peter Moro, came to Britain with far lower professional expectations. Having had little work or design experience, these young émigrés were grateful when they found employment as assistants with architects working in Britain, for they would

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[48] Compared with Mendelsohn and Gropius, the output of Kaufmann's pre-war practice in Britain was fairly high, although most projects were small-scale private commissions. See Appendix 1.

[49] Rosenberg was a young German architect who had left Berlin *TH* in 1934 to emigrate to London, where he completed his studies at Northern Polytechnic, graduating in 1935. Between 1934 and 1938 he worked first for Tecton, then for Samuel & Harding. He then found employment with Scanhouse Ltd., a firm for timber construction sponsored by the Swedish government, for whom he headed their operations in Scotland, but import restrictions during the war drove him out of this niche in 1940. During the same year he was interned in Canada, but on release joined the British army. In 1946 he set up in independent practice in Glasgow, until in 1954 he re-emigrated to New Zealand. In 1955 he took up the first town planning lectureship

not have expected anything else at that point in their career. Similarly, those who had worked mainly as draughtsmen in Germany, such as Schreiner with Mendelsohn,[50] probably were content with similar positions after emigration.[51] Working in a salaried position offered a certain degree of financial security and overall practical support (as regards unfamiliarity with British regulations, procedures, measurements etc.) for foreign architects, but obtaining such a post was not easy. The main hurdle to overcome were entry restrictions set by the Home Office which, as explained in Chapter 1.b., favoured experienced architects able to work as employers over those seeking positions as employees. Marianne Löhnberg, for instance, recalls that she was forced to leave her newly found job with Duncan, Tubbs and Osborne because the Home Office refused her work permit, insisting that she was taking away a British draughtsman's job.[52] Similarly, Wilhelm Viggo von Moltke had to give up his job with Hening and Chitty in 1938, when he was refused an extension of his work permit.

In a few cases, émigrés who had previously had their own offices in Germany took up a salaried position in England. This was the case with Carlludwig Franck, for instance, who, having left behind his Berlin office, worked as an architectural assistant with Tecton in England from 1937 until his internment in

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at the University of Auckland, from which he retired in 1978. I wish to thank Professor Robert Riddell of the University of Auckland for providing me with information on Rosenberg.

[50] Hannes Schreiner not only retained his position as an architectural assistant but also his employer. An architect from Austria and pupil of Behrens, he had worked with Mendelsohn in Berlin, from 1926 as his principal assistant. When Mendelsohn emigrated to London, Schreiner quickly followed to work with him there, and he even accompanied him briefly to Jerusalem when Mendelsohn started his office there, returning to England as soon as enough assistants had been found locally.

[51] In a letter to Carter of Feb. 28th, 1939 (RCP, RIBAA) Ascher lists two more Germans working as assistants in London: Seefeld and Bamberger. However, no further information has come to light about them during my research.

1940.[53] However, in the case of Franck this change of position should not necessarily be seen in a negative light. In fact, the work he did for Tecton, where he was involved in the designing of Highpoint II, was possibly more challenging and interesting than the small-scale commissions, mainly alterations and extensions, which he received during 1933-37 while working in his modest Berlin practice. A modernist at heart, it is also unlikely that Franck could have developed his architectural ideas to the full while working in Nazi Germany. Having been given the chance to develop his modern ideas in Tecton office, after the war Franck joined the practice of the British architect Joseph Emberton, later becoming his successor as the principal in the practice.

While those who found work as assistants or draughtsmen had the advantage of a whole office supporting them in their professional start in the new country, those who set up independently had to deal with all difficulties on their own - unless they entered a partnership with a British architect. (Such advantages are discussed in Chapter 4.a.) There were however a number of practical difficulties which affected almost all émigré architects. For many, language was at the top of the list of problems. While some were fortunate enough to possess good English before emigration, such as Kaufmann, who had become "practically bi-lingual in boyhood",[54] others struggled a great deal. Friedrich Herrmann, for example, found the language "almost insuperably difficult",[55] and Gropius

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[52] See Marianne Walter, *An Exile in England*, unpublished typescript (1995), pp.40-44. (I wish to thank Mrs. Walter for allowing me access to this text.) Löhnberg had come to England in 1937 from Berlin, having graduated only two years previously.

[53] Lubetkin's Tecton firm welcomed able, modern-minded architects of all nationalities, and as thus became a haven for a number of émigré architects seeking a salaried position in Britain. Of the Germans, Tecton employed not only Franck, but also Peter Moro and Gerhard Rosenberg.

[54] Kent, *Memoirs*, p.22. Kaufmann had lived in England with his family for a year in 1904-5 and had also been taught English by an British nanny who had lived with the family in Germany.

[55] Quoted (no source reference) in Benton, *A Different World*, p.170

"stumbled along, murmuring a language meant to be English".[56] Then there were the additional problems with the unfamiliar measurements, regulations and building customs. In letters of this period, Gropius often complained about the "difficult initial phase" in which "the 'feet', the 'pounds' and the damned language slow[ed] down the ... working speed...".[57] Another practical disadvantage for émigré architects was the fact that in Britain they were suddenly separated from their previous assistants, upon whom many had come to rely. Few were as fortunate as Mendelsohn, who was able to bring the chief draughtsman from his German office, Hannes Schreiner, to work for him in London. Gropius lacked this advantage; given his limited drawing ability and his heavy reliance on his assistants in his German office (see 4.a.), this must have greatly impeded him. Thus when in 1934 Wells Coates offered to release Albrecht Proskauer, then his assistant, to work in Gropius' office, he accepted the proposal "with great pleasure",[58] because Proskauer's German background, fluent English and experience in a British architect's office promised to alleviate several of Gropius' difficulties.[59]

In addition to difficulties with language and different conventions, German architects intending to practise independently in Britain also often had to cope with bureaucratic complications. As we have seen in the cases of F. H.

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[56] Walter Gropius, speech at Farewell Dinner in London, March 9th, 1937, GN (BHA), no number

[57] Letter Gropius to Martin Wagner, November 24th, 1934, in German, GN (BHA) 5/379. A few days previously Gropius had written to Wells Coates: "You cannot imagine what a lot of difficulties I have to overcome in the present time on account of the language and the different building methods..." (letter Gropius to Coates, November 19th, 1934, GN (BHA) 5/402).

[58] Letter Gropius to Coates, November 19th, 1934, GN (BHA) 5/402

[59] Proskauer had come to England from Germany in 1933. Coates' original proposal was to release Proskauer for two months, but he never returned to his office (see GN (BHA), 5/402-3 & 545). Instead, he became Gropius' personal assistant until 1936. Proskauer had appeared on the scene at a time when Gropius was still desperate for help, as his letters of the time suggest. Later on, he is known to have rejected rather coldly a considerable number of foreign architects

Herrmann and Harry Rosenthal, British professional bodies often demanded a formal architectural qualification from a British institution as a condition for the admission of foreign architects as members. Before 1938, such restrictions were applied at the organisations' discretion, but with the passing of the Architects Registration Act of that year it became impossible for anybody not in practice in Britain before August 1938 to call themselves an architect without having obtained a special British qualification.[60] This meant that many émigré architects, however long they had been in practice in Germany, had to sit an examination in order to receive the RIBA entry qualifications and thus be formally admitted into the profession. Many architects felt insulted by such a disregard for their German qualifications and experience and by having to return to studying, however briefly, after having practised for years. Further, given that many, including Harry Rosenthal, were over fifty at the time of their arrival in Britain, for them such an exam would have been an awesome prospect, particularly because of their difficulties with English.

However, the greatest difficulty for Germans setting up as independent architects in Britain was to secure suitable commissions. Emigration had separated them from the two main sources of commissions in Germany: their own private social network and clientele, and state patronage. During the 1920s, many architects in Germany, such as Ahrends or Gutkind, had come to rely heavily on public commissions for housing and other large projects. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, given the restrictions on the employment of émigrés as architectural assistants in Britain the public sector was almost

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who asked him for work in his London practice, including P. Moro, H. W. Rosenthal and Susan Chotzen (see letter Chotzen to Gropius, from Paris, Feb 2nd, 135, GN (BHA) 6/136-7).

[60] See Benton, *A Different World*, p.69

entirely closed to the Germans. Thus they found themselves relying mostly on private clients. Probably the most important task for an émigré architect seeking to practice in Britain was therefore to establish a social network from which he could later draw commissions. The émigrés developed varying strategies to cope with this. Those who had entered a partnership with a British architect could often slip into their partner's network of connections (see 4.a.). Others made the growing émigré community in Britain - united by a spirit of a shared émigré identity, a common language and cultural background - work to their advantage. The German and/or Jewish connection provided the architects with their own network of contacts. A considerable number of the émigrés' clients were thus émigrés themselves, often relations, friends or business acquaintances of the architect or of his family. Ernst Freud, son of the famous psychoanalyst, made his émigré and family connections work for him with great success. For Dr. Adolf Marx, a recent émigré from Berlin, he modernised the complete interior of a nineteenth-century house at 11 Pilgrim's Lane in Hampstead.[61] Dr. Marx and Ernst Freud had already known each other in Germany, probably through Marx's daughter and her husband, the art historian Wolfgang Herrmann.[62] The Herrmanns and the Freuds, coming from similar intellectual and well-to-do families, had been friends in Berlin, where they had moved in similar social circles. Not surprisingly, when the Herrmanns emigrated to London, they commissioned Freud to build a house for them in Neville Drive in Hampstead Garden Suburb [60] (see 3.b.ii.). Another client, Ernest Jones, who had commissioned Freud to build an extension wing to his cottage in Sussex, had been a long-standing friend and biographer of the architect's

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[61] See *The Architectural Review*, No.516, Nov. 1936, p.221

father.[63] Finally, when Freud's sister opened a fashion shop in Baker Street, Ernst designed the shop front and interior of the salon.[64] Similarly, Rudolf Fränkel profited from family connections when trying to secure his first commissions in Britain. Thus his house at Stanmore of 1939 [54] was built for his sister and her industrialist husband Max Rachwalski.[65] It appears that the industrialist connections of his brother-in-law were also responsible for Fränkel's being commissioned for a showroom-cum-office building for E. H. Jones Machine Tools Ltd. in 1939 [57] (see 3.b.i.), which gave rise to a series of further commissions in industry.

But perhaps the most important issue determining the degree of success or failure experienced by German émigré architects seeking work in pre-war Britain was the issue of architectural style, or, more specifically, the issue of modernism and British attitudes to it. In other words, the émigrés' success was to a large extent dependent on their ideas about architectural style and the tenacity with which they held onto their principles. As explained in Chapter 2.a., in Britain architectural modernism had been treated with great scepticism and had only begun to take firm root around 1934. But until the 1940s, modernist ideas never commanded the widespread intent and respect which they had in pre-1933 Germany. Throughout the 1930s, traditionalism dominated the British

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[62] I owe this and other information on Freud's clients to Harry Weinberger, whose late wife Barbara was the granddaughter of Dr. Marx. The Herrmanns were Harry Weinberger's parents-in-law.

[63] See A. Paskauskas (ed.), *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones* (London, 1993), p.745

[64] See Jewish Chronicle, Jan. 6th, 1939.

[65] The Rachwalskis had settled in Britain a few years prior to Fränkel's arrival from Romania. The house at Stanmore was completed in 1939, but its owners could only enjoy it for a short time, for they fled the war and Europe in the following year and moved to the USA (to which, in 1950, Fränkel went, too). There, parts of the Rachwalski family later anglicised their name to Rockwell. Information kindly supplied by Hugh Courts, whose father bought the Stanmore house in 1949 and has lived there since.

architectural profession and public taste. Since many architects coming from Germany after 1933 had experimented with modernist architecture and some had become committed and accomplished exponents of modernism, this conservative climate tempered their perceptions of their future in the country. In brief, the options left to German architects intent on building in a modern style were either to patiently join the hunt for the small number of private clients willing to 'go modern', while resigning themselves to the unlikelihood of realising large-scale or public projects, or else to find a niche in which modern design was adopted more readily, such as in industry, commerce, entertainment or certain kinds of education. The alternative was to adapt to mainstream British tastes, even if this meant compromising their own preferences or convictions. Amongst those who realised very quickly that the easiest road to commercial success was to adapt were Hans Jaretzki and Peter Caspari, who each found their own way of catering for British tastes (see 3.b.). These and other émigrés adopted, albeit in varying degrees, a pragmatic approach in which architecture is largely determined by the forces of supply and demand in which the architect provides designs according to the requirements of the market he finds himself in.

In other words, whether an émigré would get commissions in Britain was to a large extent dependent on the acceptability of his designs within the British architectural context at the time. Even within the broader parameters of modernism, the question of acceptability was paramount in determining which projects were built and which were to remain on paper. This was particularly true of non-domestic projects. While a certain Moderate Modern style, often in brick and with a tendency towards mannered detailing, had become acceptable in Britain by the mid-1930, the more radical, functionalist idiom was still regarded

with great mistrust. To understand this distinction, it is useful to take a look at which large-scale schemes by German émigrés were realised in inter-war Britain, and which projects remained visions. Significantly, only very few of the émigrés' large-scale (particularly multi-storeyed) residential or public schemes - regardless of their function and of whether they were to be financed through trusts, private or public funds - were actually executed. Among the few built schemes were Belvedere Court [62a,b], a block of 56 flats in Hampstead Garden Suburb by Ernst Freud (see 3.b.ii.), and Rosehill Court at Carshalton by Rudolf Jelinek-Karl (in collaboration with Harry Weston) [10a-c],[66] both of the late 1930s. Rosehill Court, a commercial centre arranged on a wedge-shaped plot, contained shops on the ground floor, 57 flats and some offices on the upper floors, and an entertainment unit with cinema, dance hall and cafe in the angle. The similarities of Freud's and Jelinek-Karl's projects are striking, and with little doubt Jelinek-Karl knew Freud's building before designing his. Both projects show a strong Mendelsohnian influence in terms of style and, in the case of Carshalton, also in terms of architectural programme (for the conceptual similarities to Mendelsohn's Universum complex are striking). Both designs can be described as modernist in style, but their modernism is one which - unlike the canonical International Style - embraces playful, even expressionist forms and mannered details. They feature semi-cylindrical projections with bay-windows, rounded corners, horizontal lines of banded windows and access balconies, trimmed with prominent cornices, all in facing red brick with white contrasting

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[66] Jelinek-Karl was born in Switzerland, but had received his education in Munich. Between 1930 and 1934 he worked in a number of offices in France, including that of Ginsberg and Lubetkin, and in Algeria. In 1936 he ended two years of partnership with De Montaut & Gorska to emigrate to England, where he found work as an assistant to Harry Weston. After another six months of assistantship with Wells Coates he set up his own office in London. See Jelinek-Karl RIBA Nomination Papers, Licentiate, No. 6136, Feb. 7th, 1947, RIBAA. For Rosehill Court, built 1939-40, see *The Architect's Journal*, Oct. 23rd, 1941, pp.279-281.

elements and finished off with decorative detailing in columns and entrance porches. The fact that both schemes were actually built, seemingly without encountering any difficulties regarding planning permission, suggests that the style employed by Freud and Jelinek-Karl hit exactly the right note of architectural acceptability. They had adapted their vocabulary to British tastes, the architectural environment and traditional British building methods and materials, while remaining broadly within the parameters of a Moderate Modernism.

Some concession to British attitudes to architectural style was a necessary prerequisite for émigrés who wanted to achieve credibility and see their projects realised. However, the more doctrinaire modernists were not interested in adapting their style to what they regarded as populist, decorative versions of modern design. Mendelsohn and Gropius, in particular, dogmatic figures at the core of the European architectural avant-garde, were naturally not prepared to compromise their ideas in any way on arrival in Britain. Hence both continued to design large-scale projects which, although intended for a British context, all too noticeably stemmed from a set of ideas and references developed in and for a Continental, German context, infused with principles advocated by CIAM and the vanguard of European modernists. This mainly expressed itself in their preference for high-rise living and a radical, functionalist stylistic vocabulary. Thus Mendelsohn's proposed hotels at Southsea [11] and Blackpool [12] contained 8- to 10-storeyed blocks, while his White City project [13] alternated rows of medium-rise blocks with high-rise towers (see 3.a.i.). Kaufmann, in his St. Pancras scheme [14] made a similar proposal for mixed development (see 3.a.iv.), and Gropius' original Windsor scheme comprised three blocks of flats of

up to 8 storeys (see 3.a.ii.). Each one of these projects - and the list could be extended[67] - was radically modernist in its concept as well as design, and each one remained unexecuted, regardless of the nature of the projects (which ranged from luxury accommodation to social housing). Perhaps the pinnacle of idealism and ambition in large-scale modernist projects for Britain was a town-planning scheme by Arthur Korn and Felix Samuely:[68] the MARS Master Plan for London [15].[69] Drawn up in 1938-42, this radical plan proposed to replace the existing structure of London (after presumed war damage) with a 'ribcage' layout of linear 'ribs' of residential quarters radiating from a central east-western spine containing the main transport arteries as well as commercial, administrative and industrial facilities. Based on statistical research undertaken by MARS members,[70] the Master Plan combined a rigorous application of CIAM principles, that is the hierarchical division of city functions, with *Zeilenbau* principles obviously imported from Germany by Korn. Needless to say, this scheme remained a paper utopia.

However, the rejection of such schemes does not necessarily indicate the unfeasibility of the ideas inherent in them - after all, the combination of *Zeilenbau* and tower blocks became a favoured model in post-war redevelopment in Britain (see 4.b.) - but it indicates that at the time of their

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[67] Landauer, for instance designed a number of larger flat schemes, for sites in Highgate, London, and in Sheffield, none of which were executed. In 1937-8, Herrmann unsuccessfully proposed a redevelopment scheme for Swiss Cottage in London, which included a redesign of the traffic layout and sweeping modernist blocks of flats of up to eight storeys. Two other projects by Gropius for Isokon, one for a block of flats in Kensington Road, Birmingham, the other an addition to the Lawn Road flats in Hampstead, were also never given planning permission.

[68] In collaboration with Maxwell Fry, Arthur Ling, Elisabeth Denby and Christopher Tunnard.

[69] See A. Korn & F. Samuely, "A Master Plan for London", in *Architectural Review*, 1942, No.91, pp.143-150 (reprinted in Dennis Sharp (ed.), *The Rationalists* (London, 1978), pp.190-207).

proposal, during the 1930s, Britain was simply not ready to accept, let alone realise, such radical ideas. Unlike the more moderate designs by Freud and Jelinek-Karl, these schemes represented too sudden and complete a break with established social, cultural and constructional traditions in Britain, and as such seemed foreign and alienating to the British. Above all, the émigrés' apparent belief that, by applying socio-scientific and economic arguments, they could single-handedly convert a nation of house-dwellers to high-rise flat living was utterly misplaced. Flats were still a rarity in inter-war Britain, particularly outside urban centres such as London or Glasgow, and the flat buildings which did exist were rarely more than four or five storeys high. Thus when doing research into the demand for flats in Manchester, Pritchard of Isokon encountered precisely such mistrust in high-rise and horizontal living. One estate agent found that "...Manchester, generally speaking, has not yet become accustomed to flats, and we have doubts whether there would be a serious demand for the type of accommodation under consideration."[71] Stylistically, too, the émigrés' schemes were too severe and advanced; their functionalist design made no concessions to British preferences for picturesque elements, while their concrete and steel-framed structures ignored British building traditions.

An inflexibility in the Germans' approach, that is their failure to respond sufficiently to Britain's architectural climate, was noticed by critics at the time, surprisingly not only traditionalists, but also some modernists. Thus Maxwell Fry is known to have detested Gropius' Windsor project, which he has called "a little

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[70] See John Gold, "The MARS plans for London, 1933-1942", in *Town Planning Review*, 66 (3), 1995, pp.243-267. Gold shows that Korn and Samuely's Master Plan was based on a number of earlier experiments in linear city planning drawn up by the MARS group.

[71] Letter W. H. Robinson & Co. to Pritchard, Nov. 16th, 1934, quoted in David Elliott, *Gropius in England. A Documentation 1934-1937* (London, 1974), p.3

bit of Berlin set down in England", and for which he has disclaimed all collaborative credit.[72] Berthold Lubetkin, when describing in 1937 how with the "influx of architects from abroad" into Britain "...architectural models have been transplanted in time and space as to render them meaningless,"[73] also no doubt had Gropius and other German émigrés in mind. He further explained:

> Architects who, in the recent past, had made great contributions to the development of the modern movement on the continent, found themselves uprooted by political and social changes. Transplanted to another country, they were likely to continue their work in too unbroken a sequence, not realizing that the sociological conditions were so different as to invalidate such a lack of flexibility.[74]

Looking at Gropius' Windsor project, which is an almost exact replica of a scheme he had designed for a site at Berlin's Wannsee [25] (see 3.a.ii.), it is possible to see the validity of the points Lubetkin is making here.[75] Hence while many of the problems which émigrés experienced in getting their large-scale projects realised lay in the conservative and blinkered attitude of the British as regards modern architecture, at least part of the blame can be apportioned to a lack of flexibility (or perhaps simply over-ambition) on the part of the Germans themselves,[76] at least during the initial phase.[77] It could thus be argued that

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[72] See Cormier, *Walter Gropius*, p.47. However, this attitude of Fry's, however, which was displayed in interviews with Cormier in 1984, could indicate the retrospective bitterness of an architect who had felt overridden and often patronised by the great German.

[73] Berthold Lubetkin, "Modern Architecture in England" (1937 for *American Architect and Architecture*), reprinted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.95

[74] ibid.

[75] How Lubetkin himself succeeded in securing commissions for large-scale projects before the war remains to be examined in this light. His larger inter-war projects included Highpoint I and II, as well as Spa Green and Priory Green Estates in Finsbury (the latter two not executed until after the war). Unlike Gropius, Mendelsohn and other Germans, Lubetkin adapted the modernism of his large-scale projects to British conditions and preferences, although only as much as was necessary to get his schemes accepted. In particular, he mellowed harsh angular forms (as in the curved block at Spa Green) and introduced decorative, playful detailing in his architecture (as evident in his façade patterns or the caryatids in Highpoint II). See also Chapter 4.b.

[76] Other reasons which have already been mentioned, including economic difficulties and the limited access for modernists to public funds, also played a role, but these were factors which in many cases affected British modernists as much as foreign ones. The fact that schemes

Mendelsohn, for instance, would have been more successful in Britain had he responded more quickly to the architectural climate there, and had spent less time on large-scale projects which were destined to be dismissed as utopian fancies. Indeed, had he and others been more prepared to abandon an almost naive idealism in favour of a more realistic approach, there might be more tangible evidence of the presence of émigré architects in inter-war Britain.

That a more realistic approach could indeed result in a more successful and contented career after emigration is demonstrated in the example of Kaufmann. Kaufmann, it seems, was able to avoid disappointment in Britain because he avoided staking everything on one card: although he designed some larger-scale projects for Britain, including the St. Pancras scheme [14] and the Cement Marketing Company competition project [45], he did not invest all his hopes and energies in them. Instead, he kept his practice going with a large number of small commissions, mainly shop designs and small private buildings,[78] which functioned as a buffer against potential disappointments over larger schemes. Kaufmann's experiences in Russia had probably helped to create a more down-to-earth attitude, preparing him for a certain amount of resistance against modernist housing schemes and a dearth of commissions in that field.

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such as Maxwell Fry's Kensal House of 1937 were actually built indicates that British architects, possessing a greater understanding of and sensitivity to the British context, knew how to design large schemes which, despite adhering to modernism, remained close enough to the boundaries of acceptability to be executed. Their understanding of the basic British reluctance to think on a larger scale (i.e. beyond 5 stories and single blocks) was instrumental in their greater success in this field.

[77] Gropius' architecture, for instance, underwent drastic changes during his stay in Britain, and his later projects, such as Impington Village College, demonstrate his eagerness to adapt his modernism to British conditions. See 3.a.ii.

[78] In his memoirs, Kaufmann describes how, once he had made the first contact, he had no difficulties in finding commissions: "... like a rolling stone I picked up new clients, without searching for them and my recently established practice began to snowball! ...I began to employ not only a secretary but also a few architectural assistants. I found somewhat larger offices in Bloomsbury ... where I stayed up to the outbreak of war in 1939, when it looked as if all building activity would come to a standstill for the duration of the war." Kent, *Memoirs*, p.224.

Architectural style and British attitudes to it were a crucial factor in the émigré's success in getting established in the new country, and designing on a small scale was not always a recipe for an easy passage. Thus in executing private commissions, many émigré modernists experienced the same kind of opposition to their designs as did their British colleagues at the time.[79] Such opposition, which usually expressed itself in difficulties with local planning authorities, always occurred over the question of style, with the planners putting themselves forward as the conservative guardians of 'good taste' and traditional aesthetic values. Thus it was on aesthetic grounds that Marcel Breuer and F. R. S. Yorke met with strong opposition from both landowners and local authorities when they submitted their design for a three-storey modernist house at Angmering-on-Sea (see 3.a.iii.). In the end they had to abandon the original scheme and start afresh,[80] changing, amongst other things, the materials of construction to brick and the height to two storeys [39a]. Gropius' Wood House in Kent [30a-c] was also initially refused planning permission by the local council on the grounds of its flat roof which, in the eyes of the authorities, presented a "strangely broken and uneven appearance".[81] It was only through an appeal to the Ministry of Health (and the clients' and landowner's personal influence) that this decision was overturned. Stylistic objections were also the reason for the failure of Gropius' project for a student dormitory at Christ's College Cambridge [28a,b]. This project, in which the architect had invested much effort, had to be

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[79] There are many examples of British modernists experiencing difficulties with planning permissions. For example, Maxwell Fry, in his 1934 house at Chipperfield Common, was refused the authorities' consent unless he either replaced the flat roof with a pitched one, or executed the whole building in a traditional material rather than reinforced concrete. Fry chose to keep the flat roof and built the house in facing brick with timber cladding. See *Architectural Review*, Jan. 1936, p.25

[80] See F. R. S. Yorke, *The Modern House in England* (London, 1937), p.16

[81] See Frances Donaldson, *Child of the Twenties* (London, 1959), p.181

abandoned after stimulating considerable controversy among the traditional-minded university dons (see 3.a.ii.).

Conservative architectural tastes in Britain thus presented a significant obstacle to the émigrés' path to success in the country. But what were the options open to those who were intent on continuing to practice in a modernist style? As detailed above, the limited market for modern houses, the difficulty of securing planning permission, resistance to large-scale redevelopment and the difficulty of gaining access to the public sector made finding commissions a difficult task for the émigré modernist in inter-war Britain. Thus, largely barred from the mainstream of architectural commissions, many German architects resorted to specialist areas of architectural design. Such niches, which were often the only means for the émigrés to be able to continue designing in modernist style, were of various kinds. Probably the most accessible was commercial architecture.[82] Thus several émigrés turned to shop design in order to improve their financial situation. Kaufmann designed an extensive number of shops for Rothman's, Moss Bros. and Fullers, Landauer did shop fronts for Burton's and Boots,[83] and Gropius designed some electrical showrooms for Mortimer Gall in Canon Street.[84] Industrial architecture also offered the chance to apply modernist ideas, and often welcomed the innovative structural approaches adopted by the émigrés. Fränkel was probably the most prolific producer of industrial architecture during the period, but other émigrés, including Kaufmann, Gropius, Mendelsohn and Franck, also worked in this field. Fritz Landauer found a niche

[82] Benton suggests reasons in *A Different World*, pp.58-9.
[83] See RIBADC/15/G
[84] See *Architects' Journal*, Aug. 5th, 1937, p229-230

which corresponded to his specialisation in Germany in modern synagogue design (although commissions in Britain dried up after the first two synagogues).

However, many émigré architects soon realised that the flexibility which their situation in Britain demanded often included branching out into areas outside the design of buildings. Most frequently, they would find work in the design of furniture, interiors or conversions. Marcel Breuer and Ernst Freud, for instance, worked in all three areas during the period, but many others, such as Gropius, Alfred Gellhorn, Arthur Korn and Harry Rosenthal, also used such opportunities to supplement their incomes or to get their careers in Britain started. Another way to earn additional money was by lecturing; the more famous of the émigré architects were sought after as lecturers. During the war (once released from internment), many émigrés, including Walter Segal, H. W. Rosenthal, Moro or Alexander Kurz, were able to slot into teaching posts at British architectural schools.[85] The Germans often made excellent teachers, some achieving considerable fame in their positions in post-war Britain. Previously unable to generate the interest of their clients in their progressive theories and grand ideas, they now had an interested audience among student architects. As teachers, the émigrés not only found appreciation of their experience with modern architecture and town-planning and their knowledge of modern constructional methods, but the cultural climate in war-time and post-war Britain also provided them with a fertile ground on which to sow progressive ideas (see also 4.b.). For this, Arthur Korn serves as the best example. An ardent

[85] Segal taught at the Architectural Association (1944-48), Rosenthal worked as a lecturer at Leicester School of Architecture and Building (1941-53), followed by a post at Regent Street Polytechnic. The latter also was the employer for Moro (1940-47). Kurz worked as a lecturer for the Southern College of Art at Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton (1942-48). For an account of Segal's impact as a teacher see Chapter 4.b.

modernist as well as socialist, Korn had played a not insignificant role in the development of modern architecture in Germany.[86] After settling in Britain in 1937, Korn had found himself unable to return to private practice, instead doing the odd small job while working as an active member of the MARS group [89]. It was only with the beginning of his teaching career in 1941, after eighteen months of internment, that Korn re-gained a position of influence, albeit restricted to the theoretical rather than practical realm. His first teaching post was at the Oxford School of Architecture; then, from 1945, he taught at the Architectural Association. Here he stayed for twenty years and achieved a respected position as an exponent of modernist principles of architecture and town planning.[87] The fact that much of the vanguard of progressive British architecture of the post-war era came from the Architectural Association suggests that his teaching bore fruit.[88] Possibly gratified by the impact of his ideas, Korn never returned to designing buildings.

Other German architects also took the advent of emigration as a chance to distance themselves from practising architecture. Thus Erwin Gutkind, after

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[86] From 1920-34, after a brief partnership with Erich Mendelsohn, Korn had been in independent practice in partnership with Siegfried Weitzmann in Berlin. He was secretary of the *Novembergruppe* for some years, in 1926 also becoming a member of the *Ring*. His interest in Socialism and modernist architecture and planning led to his joining the Collective for Socialist Building in Berlin in 1929 and to contacts with Russia. For Korn's work and contributions to German modernism see Clemens Klemmer, "Arthur Korn, Meister der Moderne", in *Werk, Bauen & Wohnen*, No.10, 1992, pp.78-9

[87] See Arthur Korn, "Arthur Korn 1891 to the present day", in *Architectural Association Quarterly*, 1957, pp.115-35, and "Arthur Korn, 1891 to 1978", in *Architectural Association Quarterly*, Vol.11, No.3, 1979, pp.49-54. After 1965, he taught at the Hammersmith School of Building.

[88] Projects such as Hook New Town (not built) or Milton Keynes New Town, in the design of which many Korn-students were involved, reflect the planning ideas of their German teacher. His 1953 book *History Builds the Town* summarises the ideas he taught then. See Dennis Sharp, "Gropius und Korn: Zwei erfolgreiche Architekten im Exil", in H. Frowein (ed.), *Kunst im Exil in Großbritannien 1933-45*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1986), pp.203-208

leaving Germany in 1933,[89] had unsuccessfully attempted to establish himself in practice in France before emigrating to Britain in 1935. His experiences in France had apparently robbed him of any illusion and hope about the possibility of re-establishing himself as an architect in a foreign country, for in Britain he chose a different path. Rather than joining other émigré architects in the hunt for commissions, Gutkind turned to research and planning - a career choice which was to prove rather successful. After an initial study phase, he began to work as a research consultant on urban and rural settlement for the London County Council. Then followed a number of positions in government bodies. In 1940, he became the Director of the newly founded Demographic Survey, which was in close contact with the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, then worked as an advisor to the Coal Utilization Research Station (1943-46), and finally became head of planning and reconstruction for the British Control Commission for Germany (1945-47). After that, he turned to research and journalism, devoting himself to writing articles and books on planning.[90] In 1955 he was offered the post of Research Professor of City Planning at the Institute of Urban Studies by the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and left Britain.[91]

While Gutkind and Korn managed to channel their interest in modern architectural and planning ideas into a rewarding direction, we have seen that not all German émigrés were so lucky. The conservative character of British architectural culture caused difficulties for the majority of émigrés, so much so

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[89] For Gutkind's extensive German work see Rudolf Hierl, *Erwin Gutkind - Architektur als Stadtraumkunst 1886-1968* (Basel, Boston, Berlin, 1992)

[90] He wrote a number of articles for *Urbanistica* and *Architectural Design* during the period. His publications include *Our World from the Air* (1952), *Community and Environment* (1953) and *The Expanding Environment* (1953).

[91] In the USA, Gutkind continued his research and writing, publishing, amongst other things, the first volumes of his *International History of Urban Development* (1964-72).

that after a few years many began to wonder about the reasons for their remaining in Britain. Stimulated by news of the positive reception of Continental architects in America, as well as by the repeated disappointments and growing discontent with the situation in Britain, an estimated 30% of the total of German émigré architects left the country in order to emigrate elsewhere. Apart from Gropius, Mendelsohn and Breuer, architects such as Gerhard Rosenberg, Wilhelm Viggo von Moltke, Erwin Gutkind, Rudolf Fränkel, Alfred Gellhorn and Peter Caspari all re-emigrated; some, such as Gellhorn, had spent less than a year in Britain, others, such as Fränkel and Caspari, had stayed until the 1950s. Britain thus lost not only a number of important established architects to the USA, but also several young and promising ones. However, while this might have caused a "pang of deep regret"[92] among the British architectural profession, the Germans did not apparently regret leaving Britain. In the USA, where the economic, cultural and political situation was more favourable for architects, especially modernists, they were given the opportunities and positions they had awaited for many years (see 4.b.). Gropius, Breuer and Mendelsohn proceeded to cement their reputation as the most important modern architects of the twentieth century, while others, such as Fränkel and von Moltke, became Directors of Schools of Architecture.[93]

What emerges is that, far from being a trouble-free destination, Britain presented a number of difficulties to German émigré architects in the inter-war period. For some, especially older architects and 'late-comers', these difficulties

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[92] Letter Henry Morris to Gropius, January 13th, 1937, GN (BHA) 39/165, written with reference to Gropius' departure for the United States.

[93] Fränkel went to the States in 1950, where he became Chair of Architecture at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and von Moltke, who had arrived in 1940, taught the Harvard Graduate School of Design from 1964.

proved too great for them to be able to re-build their careers after emigration. The above discussion has shown that all émigrés experienced a certain amount of difficulty in finding their feet after emigration, and that success depended on a number of factors, including the date of emigration, age, background, experience and design habits. The level of expectancy and toleration of the situation in Britain, for instance, varied considerably according to the individual's status before emigration. Hence it is not possible to identify a single typical émigré experience shared by these architects; instead, it is necessary to examine each case separately in its context. Gropius and Mendelsohn, often regarded as the stereotypical émigrés, must therefore in most respects be seen as exceptional rather than typical cases, for their position as internationally acclaimed modernists at the time of their arrival in Britain set them apart from other émigrés. Many of the difficulties émigré architects encountered in their search for work originated in Britain's dominant architectural culture at the time, and as such were shared by foreign and British architects alike. One of the most important factors in the émigrés' experience was the issue of style. Because of a prevailing hostility to modernism in mainstream British architecture, the degree of flexibility as regards style displayed by the Germans was a crucial factor. The less willing the architects were to adapt their designs to the more conservative climate in Britain, the more difficult it was for them to find commissions, and the more likely they were to grow discontent with the situation. How important a difference even the subtlest adaptation to British culture and context could make will be further explored in the following chapters.

# 3. RESPONSE

The most fascinating issue of architectural emigration is the question of the impact of emigration on architectural design. How, in other words, did German architects respond to their new environment, to Britain's landscape, building traditions, culture, tastes and sociological make-up? How did these factors alter the design habits and conceptual approaches they had developed in Germany, and to what extent did their British work represent a continuation of their German ideas? In an attempt to answer these questions, the following Chapters 3.a. and b. will focus on the actual British oeuvre (rather than the biographies) of the selected architects, offering a detailed and critical stylistic analysis of the most important architectural designs by German émigrés of the inter-war period. A visual analysis of this sort - badly neglected in the existing literature - will thus establish the main elements of change and continuity in the émigrés' work through a comparison with their pre-emigration work in Germany, and in some cases their later work in the USA or other countries. Further, it will include an examination of the origins of any stylistic or conceptual modifications which occurred; in doing so, it will attempt to differentiate between specifically British influences and other 'external' factors, such as developments on the international architectural scene, which influenced the émigrés' design patterns.

What the analysis will reveal is that despite an often strong sense of continuity in their work, none of the German architects remained entirely immune to the influences of their new working environment. Although an overall tendency towards

what I will describe as New Contextualism can be identified in the work of the overwhelming majority of German émigrés in Britain, the degree and expression of their adaptations vary strongly with each individual case. The fact that each émigré architect had a different background, different design approach, different mentality and thus different response to the émigré situation makes categorisation difficult. Nevertheless, one major factor subdivides the émigré architects: their attitude to architectural style. On the one hand, there were the architects whose belief in modernist doctrines was strong enough to sustain their loyalty to modernism throughout the difficult years following their emigration. On the other hand, there were those who, for a variety of reasons, pursued a more eclectic stylistic path during their initial phase in Britain, adopting, where necessary, indigenous traditionalist vocabulary. This distinction between 'dogmatists' and 'pragmatists' - despite the limited validity of such labels - is reflected in the division of the following section into two parts: while Chapter 3.a. deals with those who maintained a consistent adherence to modernism, 3.b. explores the very interesting work of those who were prepared to compromise.

## 3.a. *Transition*: 'International Modern' Versus New Contextualism in the Work of Mendelsohn, Gropius, Breuer and Kaufmann

In the previous chapter (2.a.) it has been demonstrated that German architects intent on practising in a modern idiom after their emigration to Britain had to overcome many hurdles in their search for commissions. This applied even to those

who had occupied leading roles on the international stage of architecture. In fact, for prominent figures such as Mendelsohn or Gropius, the situation was perhaps more difficult than for less established architects, because a failure to maintain a modernist integrity would have jeopardised their position. It is no coincidence that the four architects dealt with in this chapter were at the same time the most committed modernists among all émigrés prior to their emigration, and the only four German émigrés whose work in Britain never stepped outside the parameters of modernism. This is not to say that they did not modify the character of their work; on the contrary, as we will see, while in Britain crucial transformations occurred in the stylistic and conceptual approaches of each of the architects discussed. Yet, while these changes expanded the established vocabulary of the International Style and softened its dogmatic character, they never adopted a language other than modernism.

## 3.a.i. Erich Mendelsohn

The architect whose work, at first sight, displayed the least obvious signs of adaptation to the new British environment, was Erich Mendelsohn. Mendelsohn, having spent some months in Holland and France,[1] had arrived in Britain in November 1933, as one of the earliest and most eminent of all German émigrés. On emigration, he left behind a practice in Berlin which from around 1920 to 1930 had developed into one of the most successful architectural offices in Germany and

[1] There he had worked on the realisation of an International Academy of Art in the South of France. See Chapter 4.a.

had secured him a position amongst the most important architects of the European avant-garde. Britain, however, is only the beginning of the long story of Mendelsohn's migrations. In 1933, he entered a partnership with Serge Chermayeff in London, which was dissolved in 1936. By this time, Mendelsohn had begun to neglect London in favour of his newly opened practice in Palestine. In 1939, he closed down his British office and concentrated on working in Palestine, but only two years later he decided to emigrate once more to the United States.

Whereas Mendelsohn's Palestinian and American work each represented a significant and obvious break with (or perhaps enrichment of) his previous stylistic vocabulary, the same cannot be said as readily for his British work. In fact, at first sight his British work does not seem to present any diversions from his German work at all. In Germany, Mendelsohn had developed an individualistic approach to design often labelled as "dynamic functionalism",[2] a style distilled from his early Expressionist excursions (epitomised in the Einstein Tower of 1920-21) and the functionalist tendencies of *Neues Bauen*. The characteristic features of his mature German work - the ground-hugging yet highly dynamic horizontality and the use of strong contrasts (blank walls juxtaposed with open, glazed spaces, and geometric forms set against expressively curved elements) - reappear after 1933 as the main characteristics of his British designs. Thus the three projects which Mendelsohn realised in England, in collaboration with Chermayeff - the seaside pavilion at Bexhill of 1934-35 [16a-e], the Nimmo House at Chalfont St. Giles of 1933-35 [20a-c] and the Cohen House in Chelsea of 1935-36 [22a-c] - not only bear a close

resemblance to one another, but also display an array of elements previously employed on buildings in Germany. However, Mendelsohn did not completely ignore his new working environment; instead, as we will see, his British designs represent subtle adjustments to the specifics of their context.

The history of the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea [16a-e] has been well researched[3] and will thus only be given in summary form here. The pavilion was built as a result of an architectural competition for a seaside entertainment complex in 1933, initiated by the left-wing mayor of Bexhill, Earl De La Warr. An open-minded patron and a pro-modernist panel of assessors had drawn up specifications which made clear their wish for a non-traditional building:

> It is the intention of the promoters that the building should be simple in design and suitable for a Holiday Resort in the South of England. Character in design can be obtained by the use of large window spaces, terraces and canopies. .... buildings must be simple, light in appearance... Heavy stonework is not desirable. ... Modern steel framed or ferro-concrete construction may be adopted,...[4]

As a result of this „three quarters of competitors ... submitted schemes ... 'modern' in elevation",[5] but it was Mendelsohn and Chermayeff's scheme which, in the eyes of the assessors, met the specifications most convincingly and was awarded first prize. It was praised for being "direct and simple in planning", as well as for its

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[2] See especially Kathleen James, *Erich Mendelsohn and the Architecture of German Functionalism* (Cambridge, 1997)

[3] See especially Russell Stevens and Peter Willis, "Earl De La Warr and the competition for the Bexhill Pavilion, 1933-34", in *Architectural History*, Vol. 33, 1990, pp.135 ff.; De La Warr Pavilion Trust (eds), *The De La Warr Pavilion* (Bexhill, 1994); or Jeremy Brook, "The story of the De La Warr Pavilion", in Modern British Architecture (eds.), *Erich Mendelsohn 1887-1953*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1987), pp.22 ff.

[4] Quoted in Stevens and Willis, "Earl De La Warr...", p.138

"thorough grasp of the nature of the problem" and "masterly handling of the architectural treatment".[6]

The Bexhill pavilion was indeed not only convincing in its architectural design and engineering (it was one of the first all-welded steel frame constructions in Britain), but also a revolutionary piece of architecture in the context of British seaside buildings. While for Chermayeff, who at the time was only at the beginning of his architectural career (see 4.a.), a public commission on this scale meant an exciting and significant step in his development, for Mendelsohn it was a continuation of a pre-emigration pattern of commissions. In fact, the bulk of Mendelsohn's commissions in Germany had come from the public and commercial sectors.[7] He had also previously participated in, and won, architectural competitions for large public buildings, such as the Berlin Passenger Transport building of 1931.[8] Thus when he came to design the Bexhill pavilion, Mendelsohn could draw on a range of past experiences in related fields.

Most strikingly, there is a close conceptual and visual affiliation between Mendelsohn's Woga complex in Berlin of 1928 [17], which included the famous Universum cinema, and the Bexhill scheme. The Woga scheme was a group of

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[5] "The Bexhill Competition", in *The Architects' Journal,* Vol. 79, Feb. 8th, 1934, p.208

[6] Quoted in Stevens and Willis, "Earl De La Warr...", p.141. Clarity, simplicity and good planning were the characteristics most frequently highlighted in reviews of the pavilion that appeared in contemporary newspapers and architectural journals.

[7] He was a renowned designer of department stores (notably those for Schocken, Herpich and Petersdorff in the 1920s), office buildings (such as the Metal Worker's Union building of 1929 or the Columbushaus of 1931) and entertainment complexes (including the Universum Cinema in Berlin of 1928).

entertainment, commercial and residential buildings adjoining the Kurfürstendamm, the most imposing street of Berlin. It consisted of a street of shops with the cinema, a café-restaurant and a cabaret theatre at one end and a bachelor hotel at the other. As built, the scheme included a block of flats six storeys in height [17b], but in the original design [17a] none of the buildings rose above two storeys, giving the complex the same ground-hugging horizontality which can be found five years later at Bexhill, albeit on a smaller scale. Long, low rectangular volumes with flat roofs at slightly different levels are added onto each other, their horizontal dynamic intersected vertically by projecting members of precise semicircular shape at the points where the volumes meet. Interior functions are expressed visibly in the exterior design.

Similarly, at the De La Warr Pavilion each element of the building is articulated as a separate unit with a distinct function. The building consists of two rectangular volumes of different size and height: a chunky, nearly windowless block containing the entertainment hall to the west [16b], flanked with a slimmer restaurant and library wing with roof terrace to the east, entirely glazed towards the sea front. At the point of their junction is a central entrance hall which was designed by Mendelsohn as the "proper centre of horizontal and vertical communications".[9] This foyer terminates southwards in a large semicircular projection in steel, glass and cantilevered concrete containing a staircase and external balconies [16a], echoed

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[8] Amongst other competitions in which Mendelsohn participated are those for the Wertheim department store in Breslau (1927), the Palace of the Soviets (1929), the German Nitrogen Syndicate (1929) and the Magdeburg Cathedral Square (1930, 1st prize).

[9] Erich Mendelsohn, talk given at University of Los Angeles' School of Architecture on March 17th, 1948, reprinted in Oskar Beyer, *Eric Mendelsohn - Letters of an Architect* (London, New York, Toronto, 1967), p.169

on the north façade in smaller scale and without external access.[10] The volumes of the pavilion are arranged along a low horizontal line running parallel to the seashore, a design which in the architect's own description "looks like a horizontal skyscraper which starts its development from the auditorium."[11] As it stands, the Bexhill pavilion was intended to be only the central part of a much larger complex containing - once more analogous to the Woga complex - a multi-storey hotel to the west and cinema to the east [16d, 17b]. Several sketches, in Mendelsohn's characteristic expressive style, and drawings exist of various planning stages of these intended extensions, as well as an architectural model. However, lack of financial resources and then the outbreak of war prevented a continuation of the scheme.

There is no doubt that the Bexhill pavilion is a thoroughly Mendelsohnian project. Yet while being readily identifiable as a continuation of the architect's German work, the building nevertheless marks a departure. Above all, of course, seaside architecture, an architectural category of almost no significance in Germany, had not featured in Mendelsohn's work, which was focused around inner-city urban buildings. Perhaps the only possible German building which could have inspired the Bexhill pavilion is Martin Wagner and Richard Ermisch's *Strandbad* of 1930, a swimming and entertainment complex on the beach of Berlin's lake Wannsee

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[10] This kind of curved projection, a tour de force in up-to-date construction and materials, was - if not his invention - a favoured feature in Mendelsohn's design repertoire. It appears for instance in the Stuttgart Schocken store, the Breslau Petersdorff store, or the Mosse exhibition pavilion in Cologne of 1928, and it was to re-appear again later in his designs for both Palestine and the USA. Previously, similar curved steel and glass features had been used for instance in Gropius' Werkbund exhibition building in Cologne of 1914.

[11] Letter to his wife, March 30th, 1935, reprinted in Beyer, *Letters of an Architect*, p.140

[18].[12] Also, in 1933 there were no seaside buildings in contemporary style in coastal Britain which the émigré could have taken as models for his own design: traditionalism, and especially the Regency style, still dominated public seaside architecture.[13] In lack of any immediate architectural models, Mendelsohn therefore had to design the pavilion with the setting and the competition specifications as his main inspiration. Working from such a clean canvas resulted in a fresh and uncluttered approach which undoubtedly was at least partially responsible for the clarity and directness of the Bexhill design. The combination of freedom from stylistic preconceptions, subtle response to the environment and use of contemporary methods and materials had resulted in a functional solution, entirely suitable to the requirements of the building. Its advanced steel-frame structure made possible the light and airy appearance of the glazed restaurant/library wing and stairwell unit on the sea front, which, incidentally, seem more reminiscent of Asplund's Pavilion for the Stockholm Exhibition of 1930 than of any of the German's previous work. It also enabled the creation of a dialogue between enclosed and open spaces, between architecture and landscape. In short, Mendelsohn had found the ideal formula for a modern seaside pavilion.

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[12] As illustrated for instance in Karl-Heinz Hüter, *Architektur in Berlin 1900-33* (Dresden, 1988). Despite the fact that the Berlin scheme was executed in exposed brick, there are in fact several parallels between the Wannsee *Strandbad* and Mendelsohn's pavilion; the idea of the low-rise stretched-out main body intersected with a sweepingly curved, dynamic bay unit, for example, occurs in both. Additionally, the pier into the lake in the Berlin scheme is extremely reminiscent of an English Victorian seaside pier.

[13] Many piers and pier buildings erected during the nineteenth century survived along the south coast. (For this see Cyrill Bainbridge, *Pavilions on the Sea. A History of the Seaside Pleasure Pier* (London, 1986).) That traditionalism still dominated seaside architecture in the 1920s and 30s is illustrated for example in the 1926 pavilion by Adshed and Ramsey in Worthing, built in neo-Regency style. For Bexhill, too, some traditional schemes for a seaside pavilion had been proposed before the launch of the competition (see Stevens and Willis, "Earl De La Warr...").

Paradoxically, his pavilion provided a parallel to early nineteenth-century seaside buildings, which at the time of their first appearance were equally revolutionary as regards their use of the new industrial materials iron and glass and their innovative approach to a specific, new design problem. Parallels with traditional seaside architecture can be taken even further. Thus the horizontality of Mendelsohn's "horizontal skyscraper" could be interpreted as a seaside pier turned by 45 degrees and pulled onto dry land. This analogy becomes especially clear when comparing pictures of the steel frame structure of the Bexhill Pavilion in its unfinished state [16e] with the iron support skeleton of any coastal pier in the region, such as Brighton pier [19]: both exploit new materials and construction methods in a rational yet innovative way, simultaneously exploring their functional and aesthetic qualities. Such parallels did not go unnoticed by critics in the 1930s. In 1936, the *Architectural Review* published a special issue on 'Leisure at the Seaside', in which the De La Warr Pavilion is presented as a direct extension and logical conclusion of the developments of the last two centuries.[14] In fact, such ideas were expressed as soon as the building was opened. Thus in 1935, after the opening ceremony, the architectural correspondent of *The Times* described the Bexhill pavilion as "...by far the most civilised thing that has been done on the South Coast since the days of the Regency, of which it may be fairly said to continue the tradition in contemporary terms".[15]

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[14] See special issue 'Leisure at the Seaside', in *Architectural Review*, July 1936. The pictures for this issue were taken by the émigré and Bauhaus teacher Laszlo Moholy-Nagy.
[15] Quoted in Brooks, "The story...", p.31

By being linked directly with British building traditions the modernist pavilion was given credibility and status in the eyes of the general British public which largely still regarded the new architectural style as 'foreign' and unsuitable for their country.[16] The 'foreignness' of both architecture and designers was thus played down and rendered more acceptable to the conservative tastes of the average *Times* reader. Whether or not Mendelsohn himself was consciously continuing British traditions when designing the pavilion is difficult to establish, but it is likely that he had familiarised himself with the conventions of seaside architecture on the south coast of England. Also, he was not, in principle, opposed to learning from past architecture, as he had previously uttered his belief that "to contribute in the highest degree to your own age is to follow the finest tradition of all past ages."[17] Thus it is unlikely that Mendelsohn would have ignored traditions in an architectural field in which he still had everything to learn. At Bexhill, he assimilated tradition and context in such a way as to create a new prototype of seaside architecture which influenced many subsequent British architects. He thus left a German mark on an essentially British architectural genre.

As discussed above, émigré architects in Britain were often required to abandon previous areas of employment and find a new niche which would secure them work. In the case of Mendelsohn, the most obvious change in his working pattern was his

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[16] Thus Cyril Sweett, who worked as a quantity surveyor in Mendelsohn and Chermayeff's office during the Bexhill period, recalls: "The design of the building was not to the liking of the local residents, most of whom were retired service people, and the idea of having foreign architects designing the Pavilion was a complete anathema to them." Quoted in Modern British Architecture, *Mendelsohn*, p.69

[17] Mendelsohn expressed this view in a review of Yorke's *Modern House* in *The Architect's Journal* of July 12th, 1934. Quoted in Alan Powers, *In the Line of Development: FRS Yorke, E Rosenberg and CS Mardall to YRM, 1930-1992*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1992), p.13.

partial retreat from large-scale public commissions to smaller-scale private work. Aside from the Bexhill pavilion, all of the larger scale projects he designed for Britain remained unexecuted; only two private residences came to realisation. Until he came to design the Nimmo and Cohen residences [20,22], Mendelsohn's experience in designing domestic buildings was - despite his extensive German oeuvre - relatively small, and it was only in the last of his German houses that he exchanged Expressionist mannerisms for a whole-heartedly functionalist vocabulary.[18] This was his own residence Am Rupenhorn in Berlin of 1929 [21], a flat-roofed house with white-washed walls and continuous strip-windows built into a spacious sloping site with view of a lake.[19] This functionalist language was to re-appear in his British domestic designs, the Nimmo and Cohen houses.

Thus in the Nimmo house at Chalfont St. Giles in Buckinghamshire[20] [20a-c] Mendelsohn once again used a firmly horizontal arrangement of volumes, emphasised by horizontal bands of windows and flat roofs. From the broader rectangular main body (containing ground floor kitchen, dining and service areas) a narrow wing, the width of one room, stretches southwards. This southern wing on the ground floor terminates in a living room leading onto a garden terrace, and on the first floor contains a row of east-facing rooms arranged alongside a continuous

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[18] During the two decades of his German career only a handful of private houses were built according to his designs, all in Berlin. The house Am Karolingerplatz of 1922, the Sternefeld Villa of 1923-4 and the country house for Dr. Bejach of 1927 were still strongly rooted in the vocabulary of Expressionism, with horizontal patterns of brick and concrete stripes, zig-zag corner profiles and additive arrangements of cubic volumes in playful fashion.

[19] However, this single-family villa, with its meticulous detailing, generous planning, fine materials and up-to-date technical paraphernalia, represented the most luxurious manifestation of functionalism - it was more lavish than *sachlich.* For this, it was criticised in Germany after the 1931 publication of *Neues Haus, Neue Welt* which illustrated the Rupenhorn residence in detail.

corridor. The top floor of the wing stretches out beyond the ground floor space, its additional length cantilevered above the terrace and supported by two thin columns, thus forming a covered patio area that can be reached from the living-room. The unadorned elevations of the house are pierced with windows in various shapes, sizes and groupings, ranging from horizontal and vertical window bands to single two-wing openings. Above the front door is a large glazed area which, following the movement of the interior staircase, is carried around one corner in a curve. A further curve is introduced in the terrace area, the enclosing walls of which describe a semicircle towards south-east. Curved elements of this kind, though a trademark in Mendelsohn's public work, make their first appearance in domestic designs in Britain.

As in his Berlin Rupenhorn house [21], at Chalfont St. Giles Mendelsohn paid close attention to the relation between architecture and landscape. In Berlin, Mendelsohn extended the creation of axes, vistas and routes of movement of the interior plan into the garden, the layout of which is characterised by a playful combination of formal and dynamic, geometric and organic forms. At Chalfont St. Giles, the architect also tried to make the best use of the site by integrating the architecture with its surrounding landscape. He placed the building on the highest point of the sloping site in order to achieve the best views over the countryside, connecting the building with the surrounding nature through a terrace and steps leading into the garden. The drop of the ground has been utilised by adding a garage and service units in a lower ground-floor level to the north. Most importantly, however, in

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[20] This was a commission Chermayeff had received just before he entered partnership with

planning the house, located in an old orchard, Mendelsohn made a conscious effort to preserve a number of old cherry trees growing on the grounds. Thus the design of the house was to a large extent determined by the existing landscape. However, that this tendency in Mendelsohn's work was not specific to his British residence can be seen not only in his German work, but also in his later work in Palestine and the United States. The careful integration of architecture with nature and the play of geometric versus organic forms was to re-appear in particularly pronounced form in the Weizmann house at Rehoboth.

Located in the countryside, there had been little restriction in terms of planning for the Nimmo house. This was an unusual experience for Mendelsohn, who in Germany had been specialised in designing architecture for tight inner-city urban plots. He had always placed a lot of importance on the urban context and how to fit his architecture into it.[21] In contrast to the situation at Chalfont St. Giles, the design problems posed by the commission for a house in Chelsea (1935-36) [221-c] were much more in line with the architect's past experience and specialisation. Here, at Church Street, Mendelsohn had to work within the confined space of an old plot shared by two owners. The piece of land had been jointly acquired by the publisher Denis Cohen and the playwright Ben Levy, who each commissioned a modernist house to be built on it, respectively by Mendelsohn and Chermayeff and Gropius and Fry. These two houses [22a], both brick constructions with smooth white render, have assumed an almost iconic importance. Specifically, they have often

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Mendelsohn, who then quickly took over the project. See Chapter 4.b.

been praised for their exemplary visual and spatial co-ordination and integration, both with each other and the given urban context.[22] Collaboration between the architects had led to the co-ordination of the designs as regards materials, the height of roof lines, the orientation of the main living areas towards the garden, the placing of service wings alongside the street and the recessing of volumes on the upper floor. Erected at the outer edges of the site so as to frame a communal garden in the centre, the houses are connected by a garden wall on the street front. In order to achieve the best use of valuable city land, Mendelsohn here departed from the planning scheme he had adhered to in many previous designs: instead of laying out the building in two separate wings, he designed the Chelsea residence as a single rectangle with its long edge abutting the road. Nevertheless, the characteristic configuration of two wings on an L-shaped plan is created by articulating the south-western corner of the building, that is the corner first seen from the street, as a compact cube two storeys in height, while simultaneously setting the first floor elevation back from the road in order to create a recess above the ground floor kitchen area. The strict rectangularity of the house is broken on the garden front by a semicircular glass bay with balcony above, the curve of which is echoed in the outline of the garden terrace. Like the Gropius design, the Cohen house reserves its most open, glazed and representative façade for the garden, but its more secluded street façade ensures a sense of privacy in the midst of dense urban development.

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[21] Early on in his career, Mendelsohn had expressed his belief that town planning considerations were of primary importance in architectural design. For this see for instance Charlotte Benton, "Mendelsohn and the City" in Modern British Architecture, *Mendelsohn*, pp.50 ff.

[22] The aspect of contextualism is discussed in particular reference to Gropius' work in Louise Campbell, "Gropius in London: modernism and tradition", in *Docomomo Conference Proceedings*, 1992, pp.270-2, as well as in the following chapter of this thesis.

It has often been said that both the Cohen and Levy residences blend well into their immediate environment in Old Church Street, a suburban street lined mainly with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century town houses found in stucco and in brick; and it has been claimed that they "serve as a practical demonstration of the affinities between the Georgian and the modern house".[23] More specifically, Whittick for instance pointed out that the houses

> ...are of brick finished with cement rendering, harmonizing therefore with the stucco of the Georgian houses. They also complete the movement towards the flat roof begun by the Georgian houses. ...by pleasing relation of window to wall space, similarity of scale, and general excellence of proportion they accord with each other and the Georgian houses over the way.[24]

By forging such links between modernism and Georgian architecture, contemporary critics allocated modernism a place in the evolution of British architecture, thus legitimising and popularising its existence within a specific British context. No doubt part of the rationale behind presenting modernism as a *quasi* logical, up-to-date conclusion of British developments was to reduce the foreign character of the émigrés' buildings and make it acceptable.

In the context of the Cohen and Levy houses in Church Street, the setting itself invited a comparison between the Georgian and modernist houses. However, a direct link between the eighteenth- and twentieth-century designs suggested by Whittick and Richards, for instance, must be questioned. Although the discipline

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[23] J.M. Richards in *Architectural Review*, Dec. 1936, p.249
[24] Arnold Whittick, *Eric Mendelsohn* (London, 1956 (1940)), p.106

and simplicity governing the designs provide a clear parallel between the two styles, there is little actual resemblance beyond flat roofs and restrained elevations, either visually nor as regards planning. The horizontal dynamic of the Cohen house and its specificity to both site and client's requirements differ starkly from the vertical emphasis and standardised lay-out of the Georgian houses; while the first is a generous detached residence, the second are, in the main, compact terraced houses. Unlike standardised eighteenth-century town houses, in the modernist houses the treatment of window proportions varies considerably according to architect and façade design. Moreover, the link between stucco and walls rendered in cement is somewhat forced for Old Church Street contains Georgian houses with both stucco and brick finish. Previous research has shown that Gropius had originally intended to build his house in facing brick, but was given instructions to build a white house; it can be assumed that these instructions also applied to Mendelsohn's design. However, as has been suggested by Campbell,[25] the rationale behind these specifications was not so much to achieve compliance with the Georgian houses opposite, but rather with a pair of glamorous white neo-Georgian houses by Oliver Hill[26] erected shortly before the Levy and Cohen houses to their rear.[27] In the face of such restrictions, it would thus be wrong to over-emphasise connections between the modernist houses and their Georgian neighbours.

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[25] See Campbell, "Gropius in London...", p.271

[26] Oliver Hill designed buildings in various styles during the period, including in 'International Style' and Art Deco style, often blurring stylistic definitions in his designs. There was a strong market for an architecture of the 'window-dressing' kind in Britain at the time, and it is interesting to note that it frequently employed modernist, Art Deco and eighteenth-century details in combination. See Alan Powers, *Oliver Hill. Architect and Lover of Life*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1989).

However, it is interesting to note that the émigrés themselves were among the most ardent advocates of the idea of a connection between modernism and the Georgian style. Admiration for certain strands of past British architecture was widespread amongst German architects; particularly the rational planning, repetition of standard units, unadorned façades and the sober, elegant proportions of Georgian architecture fascinated German architects, modernists and the more traditional-minded alike. Virtually all émigré architects in Britain at some point made references to British eighteenth-century traditions, either in their designs or their ideological utterances. For some émigrés, the Georgian tradition provided a stylistic language they felt comfortable enough to emulate in their own British designs (see 3.b.), while for many modernists it provided a welcome link between their designs and British architectural traditions. Again, the rationale behind forging such links was to legitimise, dignify and render more acceptable architectural modernism in Britain. For the émigrés, there was the additional motive of gaining a foothold in the British profession (which was predisposed towards traditionalism) and winning recognition amongst colleagues and clients.

Mendelsohn, too, was well aware of the British love of tradition, and thus took to making strategic use of the connection between his own designs and past British architecture. This manifested itself less in his work than in his conceptual approach. In other words, Mendelsohn attempted to influence the way his architecture was

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[27] The instructions were given by the Cadogan Estate which on selling the site had retained certain rights to control future building on it. The stipulations as to the conformity of the houses were made in order to retain the highest possible financial value for the estate and the neighbourhood.

regarded by the British profession, clientele and public by tailoring his rhetoric. A good example for this can be found in his redevelopment scheme for White City [13a-c]. This scheme, on which Mendelsohn and Chermayeff collaborated in 1935, proposed the development of an area of around eighty acres in the outskirts of London into a housing estate. This estate, comprising around 2000 flats aimed at lower middle class tenants and around 500 apartments for bachelors, contained all the amenities necessary to turn it into a small, self-sufficient urban unit. Originally "commissioned on the basis of profitable returns for private capital investment",[28] the architects soon "came to see quite clearly the unique possibilities of the site if developed as a whole"[29] and thus proceeded to prepare a scheme for the entire site, of which several alternative versions exist. The scheme - evaluated by contemporary critics as a "scheme of national importance"[30] - contained train and underground stations, a cinema, restaurant, sports and shopping facilities, car parks and a kindergarten. To the north of the site are five parallel eight-storey blocks, faced on the other side of a central square with six twelve-storey tower blocks, curving from north to south-east. In scheme A [13a] the southern part of the plot is devoted to a massive exhibition centre consisting of long halls at right angles to each other arranged around a large central court intended for open-air fairs. In scheme C [13b,c], the exhibition centre is replaced by further blocks of flats which, curving southwards, pick up the curves of the northern blocks and complete the plans into S-shapes.

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[28] Mendelsohn and Chermayeff in their report on the White City Scheme, quoted in Whittick, *Mendelsohn*, p.104
[29] ibid.
[30] *Architectural Design and Construction*, April 1935, p.192

Several elements of the White City scheme provide a link with Mendelsohn's pre-emigration work. Thus the design for the railway station as it can be seen in the axonometric drawing of scheme A is indicative of the German's style: the stretched-out cubic main volume is accentuated on two opposite façades with semicircular projections rising the full height of the building. The public square in the centre opens up towards the west; it is framed on its northern side by the sweeping curve of the outer block of flats and on its southern side by a department store and cinema. The semicircular plan of the projecting cinema on the corner is reminiscent of Mendelsohn's Universum cinema in Berlin [17b]. Overall, the architectural solution of this south-western corner, which forms an entrance to the site, reveals Mendelsohn's previous experience with comprehensive urban planning schemes. The continuous multi-storey building blocks articulate the existing road layout, thereby responding to the spatial specifics of the site in the same way as the blocks in the 1931 redevelopment schemes for Alexanderplatz [85] or Potsdamer Platz had done. Here, Mendelsohn displays his talent for planning conceptions on a large scale, his liking for the creation of vistas and dynamic movement and his tendency to subordinate buildings to the composition as a whole rather than to articulate them as separate units. The treatment of some of the elevations in the London scheme underlines the architect's tendency towards uniformity in large-scale projects and provides further parallels with his German work: the sweeping curve and alternating horizontal bands of continuous fenestration and facing concrete of the 1928 Chemnitz Schocken store thus re-appear in the block facing the public square opposite the cinema. Here, the horizontal movement of the continuous block

is interrupted at regular intervals with glazed vertical elements, presumably containing staircases. In other façades, such as those of the point blocks or the store building next to the cinema, the movement towards uniformity seems to have been taken another step further: elevations are made up of uninterrupted, fully glazed curtain walls with flush surfaces in the style of Mies van der Rohe. This design characteristic, hitherto not found in Mendelsohn's oeuvre, could be seen as the continuation of a tendency towards increased uniformity in façade treatment and frequent abandonment of dramatic incident which had made itself felt in Mendelsohn's work from the late twenties onwards.[31]

In the London scheme, the spaces between the blocks, generously distributed, are developed with park land, and each tenant's equal profit from regular sunshine and air is ensured by an alignment of slab and tower blocks along an approximate north-south axis. This arrangement reflects the scientific principles of *Zeilenbau*, developed during the previous decade in Germany. However, the aestheticism of Mendelsohn's approach betrays the fact that he had never personally been involved in any of the scientific experiments which lay behind such planning.[32] The rationalism of the spacing and orientation of the blocks is not carried through consistently in the whole scheme: some blocks, such as those closest the stations at the western edge, seem to follow the outlines of the site purely for the visual effect of marking the border of the scheme, although this effect can only be

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[31] See Benton, "Mendelsohn and the City"

[32] Mendelsohn, unlike Gropius, Breuer or Kaufmann, had never participated in CIAM, where housing and planning questions were discussed, he had had no part in the Bauhaus, which had carried out a lot of experiments into low-cost housing, he had not been a member of the German architects' group Der Ring, also a discussion forum for these issues, nor had he taken part in the extensive municipal housing provision schemes in Berlin or elsewhere.

achieved by making compromises in terms of ideal light conditions for some tenants. The wavy outlines of the blocks themselves also seem to stem from Mendelsohn's aesthetic convictions about the necessity of combining functionalist architecture with dynamic and expressive elements. Furthermore, facilities for shopping and entertainment are distributed over the whole area rather than concentrated in clusters, as advocated by CIAM and as proposed in many town planning schemes at the time, including a project for a 'Garden City of the Future' by Breuer and Yorke of the same year [40] (see 3.a.iii.).

Britain's reaction to Mendelsohn's radical town planning vision was mixed. Although praised by a few open-minded British town planners and architects, such as F. E. Towndrow, the general public was critical. Certainly, the fact that Mendelsohn made no concession to British architecture at all, that he totally disregarded the immediate environment in his design for White City, a scheme explicitly conceived as a self-contained unit, did not increase its popularity. The fact that the scheme was never realised could stem as much from this as from the fact that due to a lack of financial viability no investor or sponsor could be found for it, given that the state funds Mendelsohn and Chermayeff had desired for the project never materialised.[33] Yet, while criticism of the White City scheme - on the grounds of monotony, over-scaled proportions, lack of individuality, repetitiveness etc. - was predictable, Mendelsohn's reaction to these criticisms is more surprising; it is here that his attempt to connect his architecture to British architectural traditions manifests itself

[33] Mendelsohn and Chermayeff had originally stressed: "We do not think that such a development can be realized through private enterprise owing to its size and the consequent likelihood of the whole being split up into unrelated portions..." (Quoted in Whittick, *Mendelsohn*, p.104). In

most strongly. Thus in a lecture the German architect defended his White City scheme against criticisms by referring not only to the uniform treatment of the façades surrounding the Piazza San Marco in Venice, but also by alluding to the

> magnificent unity of Bath, with circus and crescent, subdued to the same rhythm and the artistic expression of the same architect's hand, [which] has become one of the greatest examples of town planning.[34]

By comparing the White City Scheme with Bath, the architect drew direct parallels between the rationality of his *Zeilenbau* plan and the uniform planning of Georgian towns. The comparison is further underlined by the dynamic elements introduced in both schemes: sweeping curves and S-shaped blocks at White City and semicircular crescent at Bath. In fact, the similarity between the shallow S-curves of the White City blocks and Landsdown Crescent is so striking that it is fair to assume that the German architect was directly inspired by the latter. It demonstrates that Mendelsohn was not only familiar with historic British architecture and town planning, but also a great admirer of Georgian achievements. It is fascinating to note how, faced with the strength of British traditionalism, even the most dedicated modernists among the German émigrés felt the need to justify their work through references to historic architecture, thus legitimising its position in the evolution of British town planning.

Other projects by Mendelsohn in Britain which remained on the drawing board included a hotel and medical baths complex at Southsea (1935) [11] and a hotel

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retrospect, however, Mendelsohn regretted that the project "as usual ... falls victim to speculative avarice" (Quoted in Beyer, *Letters of an Architect*, p.169).

[34] ibid., p.106

and multi-storey car park in Blackpool (1937) [12]. In 1938 he had also collaborated with Hannes Schreiner on a competition entry for St. George's Hospital at Hyde Park Corner [83a,b].[35] All of these reflect the German architect's liking for large-scale projects and the challenge which they presented in terms of organising an abundance of different functional and spatial requirements within a framework of the most advanced technical construction. In the Blackpool complex [12] the architects obviously drew inspiration from the immediate environment of the seaside resort. Thus the project is a signifier of contemporary consumerism and modern-life mobility: the ground floor area is occupied by continuous rows of shops with flush glass fronts on all four façades, interrupted only by a covered street running east-west. The cantilevered roof level of the shops serves as a rectangular plateau from which rise two volumes facing each other. The northern volume is a broad multi-storey garage, the exterior cladding of which serves as a massive carrier surface for advertising and neon lights in keeping with the traditional local illuminations. To the south is the slim slab block of the hotel, an airy steel-and-glass-construction with terraces and continuous balconies that span the girth of the building on every floor, giving it horizontal emphasis. The projecting curves of the roof are supported by thin columns rising the full height of the building.

There are considerable similarities between the Blackpool design and its immediate precursor, a project for a hotel in Southsea [11]: here, too, a long eight-storey slab

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[35] Plans and drawings for the Blackpool and Hyde Park projects are kept in the Mendelsohn Archive at the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin, and documented and listed in Sigrid Achenbach, *Erich Mendelsohn. 1887-1953. Ideen, Bauten, Projekte* (Berlin, 1987), pp.87-93. For Blackpool see also E. Mendelsohn, "A Project for Blackpool", in *Architectural Design and Construction*, August 1939, pp.279-280. Plans of the Southsea project were published in the 1937 original edition of Nicholson,

block rises above building volumes of lesser height containing ballrooms and some shops. Although also light and airy in design and construction, the Southsea block appears more contained and cubic than the Blackpool hotel. Its main façade is divided into a grid-like pattern of cellular recesses containing balconies, the horizontal lines at Blackpool being replaced here by the vertical lines of the walls dividing the balconies, which balance out the horizontality of the slab. It is interesting to note that both these hotel projects were intended for coastal towns, which could indicate that Mendelsohn felt his success at Bexhill could be repeated in similar environments elsewhere in Britain. However, neither these projects, nor the hospital project for Hyde Park,[36] were built.

While Britain did not provide the German architect with the chance to see his large-scale projects realised, in Palestine the conditions were different. Mendelsohn had been dividing his time between London and Jerusalem since 1934, after 1937 working mainly in Palestine, and finally closing down his British office in 1939. In Palestine, the German architect was entrusted with the building of many large public buildings, including the Haifa government hospital, the Anglo-Palestinian bank at Jerusalem and the Hebrew university on Mount Scopus. The fact that Mendelsohn had quickly begun to give Palestine preference over England was not only due to his ideological inclinations and the physical distance from Europe (see

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Martin, Gabo (eds.), *Circle - International Survey of Constructive Art* (New York & Washington, 1971). For further sources see Appendix 2.

[36] Since the date for the hospital competition design is around 1938, a time when Mendelsohn had moved virtually his whole business to Palestine, his assistant Schreiner was responsible for large parts of the design. Schreiner shortly after revised the design on his own and presented it as part of a broader re-planning scheme for Hyde Park Corner [84]. See *Building*, April 1939, pp.141-143. However, the project reveals a strong influence of Mendelsohn; there are clear parallels to his Potsdamer Platz re-planning scheme in Berlin [85], for instance.

2.b.), but also due to the simple fact that he was given better commissions there within a short space of time after setting up office. The architect himself has pointed out the relative ease with which he gained recognition in Palestine, observing that "In Berlin it takes twenty years to make one's presence felt; in London, two years; here, two months."[37] However, it is not the objective here to discuss in any detail Mendelsohn's Palestinian work, which has been researched extensively.[38] Instead, a brief reference to it serves to demonstrate that in his designs Mendelsohn was not unresponsive to changes in environment. Though still carrying the unmistakable signature of his personal architectural style, his projects in Palestine display signs of adaptation to the local climate, landscape and even traditions. Above all, Mendelsohn began using a wider range of materials, especially natural stone, and adapted the relation of window to wall space to the bright light conditions, while at the same time allowing certain key characteristics of his previous architectural vocabulary, such as the long horizontal volumes and typical semicircular or cylindrical projections, to re-appear with frequency. As Julius Posener has pointed out,

> In Palestine, Mendelsohn was not opposed to certain mannerisms. These can be found on the houses he built for Chaim Weizmann and Salman Schocken... [Mannerisms] of this kind had first appeared in the building for the metal workers union in ... Berlin. Now, in Palestine, this represented something of an attempt to create a continuity while the new environment simultaneously forced him to change in more than just one point.[39]

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[37] Quoted in Bruno Zevi, *Erich Mendelsohn*, London, 1985, p.142

[38] See especially Ita Heinze-Mühleib, *Erich Mendelsohn, Bauten und Projekte in Palästina, 1934-1941* (Munich, 1986) and Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Contested Zionism - Alternative Modernism: Erich Mendelsohn and the Tel Aviv Chug in Mandate Palestine", in *Architectural History*, Vol.39, 1996, p.147

[39] Julius Posener, *Fast so alt wie das Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1990), p.237. Posener lived in Palestine from 1935 to 1948, when he emigrated to the UK. He was assistant to Mendelsohn in his Jerusalem office in 1935, and previously in his Berlin office 1931 to 1933.

In Palestine, Mendelsohn not only adapted his own work, but also began to condemn those architects who during the 1920s continued to build in the manner of European modernism without questioning the relevance of previous architectural forms in steel, glass and concrete within the context of the new environment: "...new Palestine is flooded with inadequately understood copies of these historically conditioned first attempts at a new architecture."[40] Such utterances suggests that Mendelsohn was not, on the whole, categorically opposed to modifications in his architecture, but that he favoured adapting to local conditions. By the end of the 1930s his own work showed a strong tendency towards New Contextualism, in accordance with the general move towards regionalism and anti-formalism which was taking place at this time (as will be explained further in the context of Gropius' and Breuer's work). Clear evidence of a New Contextualism in Mendelsohn's work can be found in his 1939 Agricultural College in Rehoboth [23]. The pitched roof, colonnaded veranda and rough stone garden walls of this building anticipate the tendency towards more organic forms - or, maybe, a return to an expressionism of sorts - that was to mark much of Mendelsohn's work in the USA, where he moved in 1941 after Palestine ceased to offer him building opportunities.

[40] Quoted in Whittick, *Mendelsohn*, p.113. One cannot help but notice an element of irony, even hypocrisy, in such a statement when looking at Mendelsohn's British work, which, as regards design, represented a striking continuum with his German work.

## 3.a.ii. Walter Gropius

In May 1934 the RIBA in London held a one-man exhibition of Gropius' work. This exhibition, which showed his work with the Bauhaus as well as his private work, introduced the architect to the British public as one of the main protagonists of the modern movement in European architecture. Gropius was present in London for the opening of the exhibition, and the next day he delivered a talk to the Design and Industries Association, the chairman of which, Maxwell Fry, was to become his partner in business a few months later. Back in Germany, while the exhibition was on show in London, thereafter touring to four major English cities, Gropius was making enquiries about the possibilities of moving to Britain. In mid-October 1934 these plans became reality. Barely two and a half years later, Gropius was again giving a speech in London, this time in better English and to mark the occasion of his departure for America, where he had been offered a post as Professor of Architecture at the Graduate School for Design at Harvard.

Due to his role in the development in modern architecture, existing literature on Walter Gropius is extensive and most aspects of his life and work have been researched thoroughly. Hence his time in Britain has also received some attention and is covered to a large extent in general monographs about the architect's life and work, respectively by Isaacs and Nerdinger,[1] as well as in shorter works

[1] Reginald Isaacs, *Walter Gropius* (Berlin, 1983); Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius - Zeichnungen, Pläne, Photos, Werkverzeichnis*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1985) and Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *The Walter Gropius Archive* (New York, 1990)

specifically on his English period by Elliott and Cormier.[2] Isaacs and Elliott have correctly described the German's stay in Britain as a 'period of transition'. However, they have not looked in any detail at exactly how this transitional quality manifested itself in Gropius' designs during the years of 1934 to 1937. Given Gropius' dogmatic belief in modernist architectural principles, it is not surprising that he, like Mendelsohn, remained faithful to the principles of *Neues Bauen* during his British period. However, it may come as more of a surprise that at the same time Gropius was willing, even eager, to adapt his architecture to the new environment. Recognising the necessity "to study the English market and English taste",[3] as well as architectural traditions, Gropius made a point of travelling around England. Together with his wife Ise he visited important historic sites and cities such as Stonehenge, which fascinated him, and Cambridge, which he described as "a centre of culture with very old humus which could not very easily be replaced."[4] His visit to Cambridge opened Gropius' eyes to the traditionalism with which he would have to deal while working in England: "Now I understand the conservative attitude of the Englishman, which makes it difficult for him to recognise anything new."[5] Yet, despite his recognition of the obstacles, Gropius was determined to develop his architecture in such a way as to make it acceptable to the British. However, his ideas as to how this may be achieved changed from one commission to the next, and his approach to design transformed itself accordingly.

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[2] David Elliott, "Gropius in England: A Documentation 1934-1937" (London, 1974), reprinted in Charlotte Benton, *A Different World - Emigré Architects in Britain 1928-58*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1995), pp.107-123; Leslie Humm Cormier, *Walter Gropius: Émigré Architect. Works and Refuge - England and America in the 1930s*, PhD Thesis (Brown University, 1986)

[3] Letter Gropius to Slater, January 6th, 1935, GN (BHA), 6/211. Here in reference to furniture design at Dartington Hall.

[4] Letter Gropius to Manon Gropius Burchard, London, Nov. 6th, 1934, quoted in Isaacs, *Gropius*, p.192

Probably the most interesting, and most overlooked, aspect of Gropius' adaptation to Britain is the fact that virtually every change in architectural design can be connected with a more fundamental shift in ideology. In other words, much of the deviations from past design principles were inextricably and necessarily based on the renunciation of certain ideas which had formed the very heart of Gropius' teaching at the Bauhaus and his own architecture in Germany. Thus, as we will see, in order to build houses and flats for wealthy clients it was necessary for Gropius to first distance himself from his previous ideas about the social responsibilities of modern architecture. Equally, in order to practice the contextualism and regionalism to which he began to subscribe shortly after his arrival in Britain, he had to renounce the ideas of internationalism which had marked his German work. While the visual changes in Gropius' British designs are often subtle, the way in which he compromised his past ideologies after emigration to Britain is stark and at times baffling. The strength of his earlier convictions, the fact that Gropius not only regularly articulated and publicised his ideas, but turned them into virtual dogmas, renders the contrast with his post-emigration ideas even more striking.

Gropius' attempt at an ideological adaptation to British conditions is especially evident in one of the first projects he executed for England, in collaboration with Maxwell Fry: a set of three blocks of luxury flats at St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor, designed 1934-35 [24a-c]. This project, called 'Isokon 3', was the follower of 'Isokon 2', an (unrealised) project for a block of flats in Manchester, on the strength

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[5] Ibid.

of which Gropius had come to England. The driving force behind both projects was Jack Pritchard, founder of the Isokon design company,[6] who had also been responsible for the realisation of Lawn Road Flats ('Isokon 1') in Hampstead, where Walter and Ise Gropius had been given accommodation. The original design for St. Leonard's Hill consisted of three ten-storey slab blocks set in 33 acres of park land. (This design was later amended to two ten-storey slabs and a smaller, five-storey block set at right angles to it [24a,c].) The slabs were arranged in staggered form in east-west orientation and connected by ground floor restaurants for the tenants. The 69 flats were to be as deep as the building and to contain a balcony each, which gave them a pleasingly spacious, light and airy character.[7] In accordance with the prestigious Windsor location, Gropius and Pritchard envisaged the flats would attract wealthier owners who wanted a home in the countryside as a retreat from working in London. In order to appeal to this target clientele, the dwellings were rich in modern amenities and a breadth of luxurious common facilities was provided: lounge, ballroom, cinema, library, Turkish bath, riding stables, tennis courts, and optional room and food service, which added a hotel-like character to the project.

Providing a wealth of services was part of a carefully planned sale strategy devised jointly by Pritchard and the architect, and based largely on the existence of a pronounced class structure in Britain. The failure of the Manchester project had made Pritchard particularly alert to the necessity of successful marketing.

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[6] For Pritchard and his Isokon firm see especially Jack Pritchard, *View from a long Chair. The Memoirs of Jack Pritchard* (London, 1984)

Successful marketing, as Pritchard understood it, was all about marketing your product (be it a flat or a chair) to the right clientele at the right time. His strategy was to target the high price market first: "...in order to obtain the maximum market, it is probably best to make the equipment fashionable, that is to say that 'snob appeal' must come first."[8] The intention behind this, it was argued, was to raise capital for the research into more cost-effective prototypes which could then be marketed to lower income groups. Yet whereas such a capitalist approach is to be expected of the businessman Pritchard, the fact that Gropius supported such strategies may come as a surprise. Before his emigration, Gropius had become famous as one of the most important advocates of social architecture in Europe. In 1927, the year of the Weissenhof exhibition, he still concerned himself intensely with the question "How can we build cheaper, better, more attractive housing?", stating that the "provision of housing for people is concerned with mass needs."[9] Rather than appealing to private investors in the manner of Pritchard's business scheme, he wanted to see all experimentation and research into housing funded publicly. In schemes such as the *Siedlungen* at Dessau-Törten (1926-28), Karlsruhe-Dammerstock (1928-29) or Berlin-Siemensstadt (1929-30) [92] he had developed standardised low-cost housing, the objective of which was to alleviate housing shortages by providing a maximum number of dwellings for low-income dwellers by means of cost-, labour- and space-saving strategies. Needless to say, there is little ideological resemblance between concerns of this sort and the concept

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[7] See "Memorandum for No.3" by Gropius, GN (BHA), 6/519 to 527. See also Maxwell Fry and Walter Gropius, "Cry Stop to Havoc or Preservation by Development", in *The Architectural Review*, May 1935, No.77, pp.188-192

[8] Jack Pritchard in memo on Isokon marketing strategies, quoted in Cormier, *Gropius*, p.41

of the Windsor project; the luxury dwellings at St. Leonard's Hill are a long way from social housing. This discrepancy raises several questions, in particular whether there is a direct connection between Gropius' ideological shift and his move to Britain. By December 1934, he was already subscribing completely to his employer's belief in prioritising the marketing of modern design to the wealthy classes rather than the lower classes, and that he was planning to make Windsor the paradigm of his new strategy:

I have decided ... not [to] start with social housing for workers but first make my way into the group of wealthy people. The English architects are in the process of making the same mistake that we, in other countries, made, that is to connect *à tout prix* modern building with cheap building and to confuse 'efficient' with 'cheap'. I am convinced that the new line will only be accepted by the workers if the bourgeois has first been reconciled. ... This opinion may surprise you but it is well founded in experience and I will conduct here an exemplary test.[10]

Typically, Gropius here makes it sound as though he had arrived at these conclusions quite independently, whereas in fact they had probably been formed through a repeated exchange of ideas with Pritchard. For it is certainly no coincidence that a few months later Pritchard was to re-iterate the same ideas in similar language and imagery:

The new Isokon scheme is concerned in the belief that to get honest to goodness decent modern living over to the artisan and working classes, it is necessary to start at the top and work through all

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[9] Walter Gropius, "How can we build cheaper, better, more attractive housing?", 1927, reprinted in Charlotte & Tim Benton (eds.), *Form and Function. A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890-1939* (London, 1975), p.195

[10] Letter Gropius to Giedion, Dec. 27th, 1934, quoted in Nerdinger, *Gropius*, exhibition catalogue, p.188

> income classes to the bottom, otherwise the worker thinks 'modern' is merely for him, and therefore charity, and the middle classes thinking it is only for the worker won't have it at any price.[11]

It is interesting to note that both Gropius and Pritchard felt the need to justify the validity of their project in relation to the 'good cause', the original social ideals of modern architecture. The essentially commercial nature of the Windsor project was thus cloaked with a mantle of expediency. Similarly, when it came to advertising the scheme, Gropius, Fry and Pritchard pursued a conservationist line which was saturated with the rhetoric and imagery of *Siedlungs* architecture and CIAM principles. In May 1935 an article entitled "Cry Stop to Havoc or Preservation by Development", written by the architects, appeared in the *Architectural Review,*[12] and around the same time Pritchard published a brochure advertising the planned scheme as a place "Where life is Living"[13] [24b]. Both publications stressed the advantages of high-rise building over high-density low-rise development, arguing that by building upwards rather than outwards one would preserve the countryside, which was under threat of destruction through suburban sprawl. At St. Leonard's Hill, so it was reasoned, the erection of high-rise flats would mean the preservation of the surrounding park land, a "site of extraordinary beauty" which could then "become the most beautiful recreation ground for all inhabitants",[14] who could enjoy it by strolling in the woods or marvelling at the view of Windsor castle from their penthouse flats. This conservationist line of argumentation had been employed by Gropius since 1928, when he began advocating high-rise buildings (probably as a

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[11] Letter Pritchard to Leonard Elmhirst, May 10th, 1935, Pritchard Archive (PA) at the University of East Anglia (UEA), PP/15/4/375
[12] Fry and Gropius, "Cry Stop to Havoc..."
[13] *Where Life is Living*, brochure, London, 1935
[14] Gropius, "Memorandum for No.3", p.1

direct result of his involvement with CIAM, which was founded the same year). In 1929-30, for instance, in immediate succession to his *Siedlung* Haselhorst project (which consisted of 12-storey blocks), he had worked on a project for high-rise apartments of steel-frame construction with which he wanted to prove that high-rises offered not only more green space, light, air and sun for the inhabitants, but also greater cost-efficiency.[15] At Windsor such ideas tied in neatly with existing conservationist campaigns by organisations such as the Design and Industries Association (DIA) and particularly the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).[16] No doubt Pritchard, Fry and Gropius[17] consciously tried to refer to such discourses by presenting their project as the ultimate solution to all these concerns. This conservationist argument emerges less as an expression of ecological concerns than another part of a sophisticated market strategy.[18]

However, the Windsor project was not the first in which Gropius had used conservationist and market-strategic arguments to cover up an ideological shift.

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[15] High-rise building and living became the foundation of Gropius' new concept of the ideal urban society, which he first described expressly in an article on "low, medium and high-rise buildings" in *Das Neue Berlin* in April 1929, thereafter making it the basis of several CIAM lectures. Interestingly, at the Brussels CIAM congress in 1930 the Frankfurt architects Kaufmann and Böhm disproved Gropius' claims about the economic advantages of high-rises by presenting the results of their own research, which demonstrated that in fact three to four-storey buildings were the cheapest.

[16] The CPRE was founded in 1926 in order to "work for a living and beautiful countryside on behalf of future generations." Its members were (and still are) individuals and local societies interested in the protection of the English countryside. The ideas of CPRE campaigners and modernist architects and planners were more happily compatible than one might expect. This is illustrated not only in the Windsor project, but can also be seen in the fact that in 1939 Ernö Goldfinger and Ann Parker designed an exhibition stand for the CPRE at the National Camping exhibition. (See BAL, GolEr/407/1.)

[17] All three had been in contact with the DIA: Fry had been chairman for several years, Pritchard a member, and Gropius had given talks for the DIA. Via these connections they would most certainly have been made aware of the CPRE's activities.

[18] One reason for the early adoption of conservationist arguments had been the need to win the King's support for the project; since St. Leonard's Hill was Royal land, the project could not go ahead without the King's blessing. Fortunately, this was quickly obtained.

Compromises in ideas and principles had already occurred in Gropius' work during his last years in Germany. As explained in Chapter 1.a., the economic situation in the years immediately prior to Hitler's take-over was so desperate that architects had to go to great lengths to secure commissions, compromising their principles where necessary. Gropius, himself badly affected by lack of work in those years, also followed this pattern. From 1932 he began to abandon ambitious large-scale projects in favour of small private residences for wealthier clients. In the hope of making his designs more acceptable to prospective clients, he even designed some speculative projects which reverted to traditional forms, making it "quite apparent that the office was under economic pressure and ...ready to give up all dogmatic ideas to obtain work."[19] An even more surprising compromise in principles occurred after the political changes of 1933. The fact that Gropius tried to make his architecture acceptable to the National Socialist regime illustrates that, already before his emigration, Gropius was prepared to put aside previous political lines in order to receive commissions and reveals an opportunistic trait in his character.[20]

Thus, although Windsor marks a departure from the ideologies prevalent in Gropius' work in the 1920s, it also has an element of continuity with his pre-emigration work. In fact, Gropius had already toyed with the idea of building grander dwellings for the wealthier classes before he came to Britain. This is

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[19] Nerdinger, *Gropius*, exhibition cat., p.178. In his 1932 project for semi-detached houses for one and two families, for instance, Gropius not only employed conventional planning and elevations, but also a steep hipped roof, which he would previously have opposed as a matter of modernist principle.

[20] As illustrated in his entries for Nazi architectural competitions: he submitted designs for the Reichsbank Building in Berlin and the Houses of Labour (initiated by *DAF*, the German Labour Front) and participated in the exhibition *Deutsches Volk - Deutsche Arbeit* (where he was responsible for the Non-Ferrous Metal Show). See also Chapter 1.a.

evident in his project for high-rise blocks of flats on the shores of the Wannsee, a picturesque lake in Berlin [25]. In this 1930-31 project, Gropius distanced himself from the principles of 'minimal' social housing which he had been advocating up to this point.[21] As in the Windsor scheme, in the Wannsee project luxurious amenities (such as restaurants and club pavilions) replaced the communal facilities which had been characteristic of social housing schemes. Similar to the English project, the client envisaged for the Berlin flats was not the worker in need of decent housing, but the wealthy professional who could afford to pay for added facilities and beautiful scenery. In terms of design, too, the Windsor project was based on the Wannsee scheme. The slab blocks are of similar height and proportions, and spaced and arranged in the same staggered way to ensure the best exposure to sunlight and view from each flat. In both projects, one-storey buildings connect the blocks on the ground floor. The elevations, too, are very similar in their regular grid pattern of windows and recessed balconies.

Although Gropius' reputation, during and after his lifetime, has always been based on the radical-progressive nature of his ideas on architecture, it is important to remember that throughout his career the architect and teacher was prone to certain ideological ambiguities, and was capable of giving his radical views a more conservative tone whenever he thought it necessary. Even before moving to England Gropius must have realised that, if he wanted to keep open his options for his future work in the country, he had to present his views to the British in such a

[21] Had the architect continued to plan on social lines, he would have fitted at least 60 apartments into each of the 11-storey blocks of the Wannsee project - as it was, they contained only 46 units

way as to not to offend their sensibilities. Thus when addressing a British audience with his views on the ideal form of living in his 1934 article in the *RIBA Journal*, Gropius softened the dogmatic tone of his past writings on the topic:

> Opinion is still very divided as to what is the ideal form of dwelling for the bulk of the population: separate houses with their own gardens or tenement blocks... *The decisive factor in the choice of a dwelling for the townsman is maximum utility. The nature of that utility depends on his tastes, his profession and his income.* It is indisputable that to most people the separate house seems the most tempting haven in which to take refuge from the stormy ocean of a great city. The direct communication with the garden, *the greater seclusion, the delicious sense of complete possession...* All the same, the tenement block is a type of housing which is a truer embodiment of the needs of our age.[22] [my italics]

This text was clearly written with an Englishman's love of the small private house in mind. Similarly, when Gropius came to summarise his past experience and ideas for the English-speaking public in his 1935 book *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, he adjusted his writing to the new audience in order to achieve maximum popularisation of his ideas. In the face of the British dislike of dogmatism, Gropius now strategically stressed that "The object of the Bauhaus was not to propagate any *style*, system, dogma, formula or vogue, but to exert a revitalising influence on design..."[23] On the whole, as Nerdinger has pointed out, "...in his English portrait of the Bauhaus, Gropius left out all social implications of design that had been of great importance for the school...".[24] Instead, faced with the strong attachment of the British to their national traditions, Gropius chose to re-assure his new readership on

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each. Interestingly, Gropius' plans for a large social housing estate at Haselhorst in Berlin had been rejected immediately prior to his designing the Wannsee flats.

[22] Walter Gropius, "The Formal and Technical Problems of Modern Architecture and Planning", in *RIBA Journal,* May 19th, 1934, Vol. 41, No. 3, p.691

[23] Gropius, *The New Architecture*, p.92

the last page that the New Architecture "was in no sense in opposition to 'Tradition' properly so-called"[25] - a statement which prior to 1933 would have been unthinkable for Gropius. By renouncing previous convictions in order to appeal to a new audience, the architect proved himself a strategic player capable of responding to new conditions with crucial ideological shifts.

The project for St. Leonard's Hill was Gropius' enthusiastic last attempt at realising - albeit in a drastically modified version - a concept of high-rise living which he and other CIAM members had been idealising and advocating for the last six years. However, in the end Pritchard was unable to raise the necessary funds and the Windsor project fell through. Disappointed, Gropius abandoned the idea of high-rise apartments for many years to come.[26] Yet the disappointment at Windsor had also made Gropius wiser; it had taught him that the English way of life was neither culturally and historically predisposed to multi-storey living,[27] nor ready for the conceptual and stylistic radicalism of his ideas. He realised that adaptation to British traditions and tastes had to go beyond a snob-appeal and conservationist arguments if he wanted to secure significant commissions. Gropius, like other German émigrés, now could not afford to be too choosy. As before, during the difficult years of 1931-33, he had to move slightly closer to the architectural

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[24] Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *The Walter Gropius Archive*, three volumes (London, New York & Cambridge/Mass., 1990), vol.1, p.xxiv

[25] Gropius, *The New Architecture*, p.112. On the same page Gropius also points out that he belongs "to a Prussian family of architects in which the tradition of Schinkel - the contemporary as well as the 'opposite number' to your own Soane - was part of our heritage." The fact that Gropius addresses the issue of tradition on the last page of the book shows that he considered it essential that when the readers put down the text these sentences were the last to ring in their ears.

[26] It was not until after the Second World War that Gropius, in the USA, began to build higher than eight storeys again.

[27] As opposed to Scotland, where a tradition of high-rise living existed since the 19th century.

mainstream and to retreat into small-scale projects of mainly domestic nature in order to sustain himself financially. Hence turning his back completely on social housing on emigration to Britain was as much a result of economic necessity as of market-strategy. That it involved the abdication from an ideological principle to which he had previously declared himself loyal seems to have presented little problem to Gropius, who explained it as a mere "a shift of emphasis."[28]

During his period of working in Britain, Gropius built two private houses: one in Old Church Street in London, Chelsea of 1935-36 [26], and the other a wooden house in Shipbourne, Kent of 1936-37 [30]. The house in Old Church Street [26a,b; 22a], as explained above, was executed on a plot which had been purchased collectively by the dramatist Ben Levy (who commissioned Gropius and Fry) and his cousin Dennis Cohen (commissioner of the neighbouring house by Mendelsohn and Chermayeff). The Gropius house, like its Mendelsohnian neighbour, is a steel-framed brick building with plain white-rendered façades and flat roof. Its white-walled modernism contrasted considerably with the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century town houses which dominated the architecture of the area, while it complemented the appearance of the neo-Georgian houses by Oliver Hill to the rear of the Levy-Cohen plot (see 3.a.i.). The Levy House [26] is an elaborately planned residence, the attention of which is directed not towards the street but towards the generous garden. The garden, sheltered by a high wall alongside the pavement connecting the two modernist houses, was the epitome of what Gropius had described as a "haven in which to take refuge from the stormy ocean of a great

[28] Letter Gropius to Giedion, from America, quoted in Nerdinger (ed.), *The Walter Gropius Archive*,

city."[29] Gropius and Fry's design turns a blocky 3-storey elevation towards the street, sweeping around the corner towards the garden in a curve which is cut open at the top to form a roof terrace. At right angles to the street a separately articulated 2-storey wing stretches into the garden. The garden façade [26b] is very light and open: the ground floor is fully glazed, a balcony above runs along the entire length of the volume, jutting forward in a curve on the corner to form a sleeping balcony above and a covered veranda underneath. Elegant slim stilts support the balcony. An uninterrupted band of windows on the first floor adds horizontal emphasis. The lightness of the façade and the generous use of glass achieve an effect of transparency between interior and exterior space. The multiple terraces, balconies and sliding doors point to a pre-occupation with outdoor living which, originating in a concern for health, hygiene and alternative forms of living, had been a standard feature of *Neues Bauen*. Yet, within the context of urban London, where sunshine and privacy are rare commodities, Gropius' concern for the outdoors seems somewhat over-enthusiastic.[30]

Several scholars, including Cormier, have gone to great lengths to find proof of the architect's "growing 'Britishness'"[31] in the Levy house. Of course it is possible that the secluded layout was a direct response to a British love of privacy, but it may just as easily have been motivated by a desire to make the best use of the site. As regards design, Elliott believes that the Levy house marked a departure from the German's past architecture, in as much as it showed "an attempt by Gropius to

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p.xxiv

[29] Gropius, "The Formal and Technical Problems...", p.691

break out from the somewhat clichéd rectangularity of the 'Modern Style'"[32] by means of the introduction of curves. Cormier has suggested that the use of curved elements was a direct response to distinctly British forms of architectural modernism.[33] However, although Gropius had not previously used curves in his domestic designs, it would be wrong to say he had never experimented with non-rectangular forms before leaving Germany: several of his large-scale projects, including the 1927-29 Dessau Employment office, the 1931 competition entry for the Palace of the Soviets and various theatre designs, were based on round or semicircular geometric forms. The cut-out corner forming a roof terrace was also an idea originating in Gropius' German work: it echoes the arrangement at house No.16 at the Weissenhofsiedlung in Stuttgart [27], one of two houses erected by the Bauhaus for the 1927 exhibition.

Another element which has been described as indicative of Gropius' break with previous design patterns is the irregularity which prevails in the Levy design, evident in the asymmetry of the arrangement, the juxtaposition of contrasting elements and especially the lack of coherence in the fenestration. Cormier has claimed that this irregularity was a result of Gropius' "striving to come to grips with the picturesque in British architecture."[34] Yet, while the architect had been drawn to symmetry and regularity in his large-scale projects, his small scale domestic work in

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[30] The fact that the provisions for outdoor living were not appreciated by the British is illustrated in the fact that the roof terrace of the Levy house was later turned into an enclosed room.
[31] Cormier, *Gropius*, p.93
[32] Elliott, "Gropius in England...", p.118
[33] Cormier, *Gropius*, pp.87-88. Here, Cormier is especially referring to the influence of Art Deco on British architecture. She also suggests that the Levy house was inspired by Lescaze's headmaster's house at Dartington.
[34] ibid., p.92

Germany shows that a certain disposition to asymmetry already existed in Gropius' pre-emigration work. Varying fenestration, alterations of height and playful weighting of volumes in houses such as the residences for Auerbach (1924) or Zuckerkandl (1927-9) in Jena demonstrate that even before 1934 Gropius liked to play with emphasis and accents in smaller buildings. Furthermore, Gropius himself, certainly at the time of the Levy house, was not predisposed towards British picturesque traditions. In fact, as we will see in later chapters, he, together with most other German émigré architects, favoured the balanced symmetry and restrained regularity of British eighteenth-century architecture over that of the nineteenth century. Although Gropius had almost certainly developed his preference for the quiet dignity of Georgian architecture before his emigration, in Britain it was reinforced through his travels and his English partner Fry,[35] as well as through some of his work.[36] When asked what he liked best about English architecture in a radio interview with Fry in 1937, Gropius stressed his preference for the 18th century: praising its good proportions and beautiful planning, he described Bath as a "perfect town", which in his opinion gave "a strong impression of the freedom, discipline and creative power of that era... It is a unique example of unity in every sense of the word."[37] He underlined those aspects of British architectural traditions which appealed to him as a modernist: good proportions and

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[35] He and Ise visited many English cities, including Cambridge and Bath. Maxwell Fry, who lived in a Georgian house in Hammersmith, probably contributed a great deal to acquainting the German with past British styles (as pointed out by Campbell, "Gropius in London...", p.270). A liking for the Georgian style may also have been imparted by Fry, who had been trained at the pro-classical Liverpool School of Architecture and had been designing neo-Georgian buildings up to the beginning of the decade (see Chapter 4.a.).

[36] For instance the renovation of a flat on Russell Square in London and the re-design of the interior of a terraced town house at Sussex Place, both in 1935, brought Gropius into first-hand contact with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British architecture and town planning. (The

careful planning, discipline and unity, regularity and rationality. He did not, it should be noted, admit to any admiration for picturesque, irregular tendencies in British planning and design.[38]

The continuity with his German work which is evident in Gropius' Chelsea design can also be found, on a conceptual level, in his other British work. Thus Gropius' interest in progressive pedagogical projects formed an important feature in his work throughout his career,[39] in Germany, Britain and America. In Germany, this interest can be seen in his repeated participation in competitions for educational buildings, as well as his involvement with projects such as Piscator's *Totaltheater* and, above all, his own Bauhaus school [1]. Moreover, Gropius - calling himself Professor - was a teacher himself, and by the time he emigrated to England, his name had become associated with progressive architectural education, a subject on which he lectured throughout his career and in many schools of architecture in Britain. Here, Gropius became involved, as an architect, in several educational schemes, most importantly Dartington Hall, Christ's College Cambridge [28] and Impington Village College [29].[40]

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second address is *not* the Sussex Place designed by Nash, as claimed in some of the literature, but another London address of the same name.)

[37] Quoted in Cormier, *Gropius*, pp.57-58

[38] However, his later work, especially his irregular, non-geometric town planning schemes in the USA (such as at Aluminium City, New Kensington, 1941-42), reveal that picturesque tendencies and Garden City ideas had perhaps made more of an impression on Gropius during his stay in England than he would have confessed to at the time.

[39] The persistence of a strong interest in educational architecture is also evident in the work of Eugen Kaufmann, another German émigré architect, whose work will be discussed in the following.

[40] Interestingly, a special commitment to educational projects can also be found in the work of Gropius' partner Fry. In his 1934 Kensal House, Fry had included a nursery school. Later on, maybe partially inspired by his experiences at Impington, he published a book on *Architecture for Children* (1945, with Jane Drew) and worked on a University project for Ibadan in Nigeria. Both Gropius and Fry sent their daughters to progressive schools. (See Cormier, *Gropius*, p.108.)

Gropius' involvement in the Dartington Hall project never quite reached its full potential due to the fact that the school already had another architect, William Lescaze.[41] Under the auspices of New York-educated Dorothy Elmhirst and her husband Leonard, Dartington Hall in South Devon had been developed into a place of progressive pedagogy (with an emphasis on agricultural studies) and research into rural economy and regeneration.[42] When Gropius first met the Elmhirsts at a dinner in London in 1934,[43] Lescaze had already built several buildings for pupils and teachers at Dartington, early examples of the International Style in Britain. Gropius was impressed with the Elmhirst's understanding of the importance of the relationship between a progressive educational enterprise and its architectural setting. He was enthusiastic about Dartington's pedagogic potential - in a letter to Wagner he grandly and somewhat inappropriately described it as "a kind of English Bauhaus"[44] - but his enthusiasm was partially fuelled by his desire to find employment as an architect there himself, much to Lescaze's displeasure.[45] Yet, although the Elmhirsts proved themselves to be generous benefactors for Gropius and his wife throughout their stay in England, they could not offer the émigré much in terms of commissions. Gropius' self-promotion (immediately after their first

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[41] Lescaze was a Swiss architect who had worked in the States since 1920. In 1931 he had been appointed chief architect for Dartington Hall, in replacement of O. P. Milne, who had designed the school's first buildings. See Lawrence Wodehouse, "Lescaze and Dartington Hall", in *Architectural Association Quarterly*, Vol.8, No.2, 1976.

[42] For details on the ideas and programme behind Dartington Hall see Victor Bonham-Carter, *The Survival of the English Countryside* (London, 1971).

[43] Gropius had previously visited Dartington College privately for three weeks in 1933. See GN (BHA), 5/367.

[44] Letter Gropius to Martin Wagner, Dec. 12th, 1934, cited in Nerdinger, *Gropius*, exhibition cat., p.264

[45] Gropius' obvious interest in Dartington Hall caused justified worries for its architect Lescaze, who was anxious that Gropius would try taking his place: "...I do realise that, what with his charm, his

meeting he had bestowed his architectural ideas on *Totaltheater* on the couple) resulted only in a consulting contract and a minor commission for the conversion of a barn into a theatre. For this theatre Gropius made extremely ambitious plans,[46] but in the end his work did not extend beyond a consulting function on minor details such as the choice of curtain fabric. Further plans by Gropius for the establishment of a design-panel at Dartington Hall, along Bauhaus lines and with himself as its head, also came to nothing.

Disappointment was the main outcome of other educational projects, too. Thus a scheme for a new student dormitory at Christ's College, Cambridge [28a,b], commissioned in 1935, also fell through. In the original commission the College had specified that the desired building was to be contemporary in style yet in harmony with the existing surrounding stone buildings. The plans drawn up by Gropius and Fry showed a building complex which included student halls as well as a number of shops and a tutor's house. Sandwiched between a commercial road to the west and a college courtyard to the east, the dormitory was an L-shaped, flat-roofed 4-storey block, with an added two penthouse flats on the southern end. Above a glass brick wall on ground floor level, the flush elevations are structured by horizontally arranged windows, whose slight variations of height create a lightly

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Bauhaus reputation and his friendship with Jooss [the émigré dancer], the situation might be very dangerous for me." (Quoted in Wodehouse, "Lescaze...", p.9.)

[46] In a lengthy memorandum for the Dartington theatre (GN (BHA), 6/196), Gropius declared his intentions of transforming the little barn into a multi-purpose performance place for plays, operas, dances, concerts, films and lectures. Naturally, the cost of these plans went well beyond the possible. From existing drawings (see Nerdinger, *Gropius*, exhibition cat., p.264) it also seems that Gropius intended an open-air performance arena in the form of a Roman amphitheatre for Dartington Hall. However, this arena is uncomfortably reminiscent of a *Thingstätte*, a Nazi open-air theatre of the kind Gropius had included in a 1934 competition design for the Houses of Labour (see ibid., p.263).

playful façade pattern, intersected at regular intervals by small metal-railed balconies resembling those found on the dormitory wing of the Dessau Bauhaus. In deference to the material of the surrounding college buildings, the façades of the new block were to be clad in natural limestone. Contrasting with this, a new tutor's house connecting with the south end of the dormitory as part of the scheme, was designed in brick.

The Christ's College design throws new light on the issue of Gropius' readiness to adapt his architecture to the requirements of his new working environment. Believing that if he could achieve a foothold in the academic heart of British tradition, it would open up doors for him and modern architecture all over Britain, Gropius was eager to succeed with this commission. To this end, he was prepared to make stylistic and conceptual concessions, as expressed clearly in a 1936 manuscript:

> ...my conception of modern architecture does not involve adherence to any rigid theoretic formula. ...Fry and I are not of course irrevocably attached to our present scheme and willingly prepared to consider alterations of features which for any good reason should prove unsuitable to the College.[47]

There is little trace here of the uncompromising nature which is often associated with Gropius' work. Above all, the fact that the German, previously so concerned with the social viability of architecture, seemingly had no problem executing a prestigious design for an essentially conservative and elitist institution once more demonstrates his capacity for ideological about-turns. As a result of Gropius'

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[47] Quoted in Cormier, *Gropius*, p.138

compromising attitude, the design itself [28a] is marked by a sense of ambiguity, even indecisiveness: its impact is weakened by the architect's incoherent attempts to integrate it with its historical surroundings. The main gesture towards traditionalism and contextualism was the cladding in natural stone. Characteristically, Gropius embellished his design decision with much rhetoric, putting forward spurious theories on how modern designs fit into old architectural contexts. Based on the alleged "study of the buildings of old masters", he came to the (in reality historically incorrect) conclusion that "...the materials used for the fassade [sic] of a modern building matter much more than its forms in the attempt of fitting it harmoniously into the neighbourhood."[48] In the case of the Christ's College project, however, it is doubtful whether integration would have been successful on the basis of stone cladding alone, especially in its combination with glass bricks on the ground floor. At odds with their claims about accordance of materials is Gropius and Fry's design for the tutor's house: the facing brick of the walls of this part of the building contrast starkly and incongruously with the finish of both the new dormitory and the old college buildings. In the tutor's house, concessions towards traditionalism are taken much further than one would expect Gropius to be capable of. Attempts at co-ordinating the elevations with their immediate context are especially obvious in the proportions of the vertical windows, which are evidently derived from neighbouring buildings and have little in common with *Neues Bauen*.

[48] ibid.

However, despite the many compromises in the design, many contemporaries still regarded it as an outrageous proposition in the architectural context of the town and its university. Continuing controversy amongst Cambridge dons about the suitability of the Gropius/Fry scheme caused repeated delays, until in March 1937 the College finally rejected the plans "on the grounds of their too frank modernity."[49] This rejection represented another great disappointment, as well as financial set-back, for Gropius, and had he not just accepted the professorship at Harvard, the decision from Cambridge might have finally convinced him that his career had little future in Britain.

While the Dartington and Cambridge projects had been largely unsuccessful, Gropius and Fry's collaboration with Henry Morris, Educational Secretary for Cambridgeshire, had brought the long longed-for (and only) British success for the German in the field of educational architecture: Impington Village College [29a,b].[50] After their first meeting in 1934, engineered by Jack Pritchard, Gropius had sent Morris a copy of his *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*. This was intended to contribute to the Pritchard-led project of convincing Morris that his progressive pedagogic ideas needed to be housed in equally progressive architecture. Sharing a concern for rural regeneration with the Elmhirsts, Morris' Cambridgeshire-based educational project was to "arrest the decay [created by rural exodus and educational crisis] by conceiving the Village College as a community centre for

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[49] "The Designs that Cambridge Rejected", in *The Architects' Journal*, Feb. 3rd, 1949, No.110, p.116

[50] In 1935-36, under the auspices of Morris, Gropius and Fry had also been working on a project at Papworth for a school for children suffering from tuberculosis. There are strong similarities in design to the Impington plans, especially in the wedge-shaped hall and the loose grouping of

people of all ages in the rural community."[51] His idea was that, after the age of three, "there would be no leaving school".[52] The Village Colleges were publicly funded institutions which provided primary, secondary and adult education as well as cultural and recreational facilities for the village communities, including libraries, theatre halls and sports grounds, as well as rooms for games such as billiard, cards or table tennis. By the time Morris came to commission Gropius and Fry with the school for Histon and Impington, he had already achieved the realisation of three Village Colleges: at Sawston, Bottisham and Linton, in this order. Yet, these buildings had not been too concerned with giving visual expression in their outer architectural garment to the progressive educational ideas they were housing. Still, a certain progressive evolution towards more modern architectural forms can be detected: while Sawston (designed by H. Dunn) was executed in the neo-Georgian style fashionable in inter-war Britain, at Bottisham and Linton the architect S. Urwin replaced traditionalism with a more modern idiom of low, flat-roofed, extensively glazed volumes arranged on an open plan and detailing echoing the mannerisms of Art Deco. This evolutionary process finally found its culmination in Morris' fourth Village College at Impington.

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extensively glazed classrooms. However, the Papworth project did not advance beyond the first planning stages, possibly because of a lack of funds.

[51] "Village Reborn", in *News Chronicle*, November 4th, 1937, at the archive of Impington Village College (IVCA)

[52] Morris in first memorandum for Village Colleges, 1924, quoted in Harry Rée, *Educator Extraordinary - the Life and Achievement of Henry Morris* (London, 1973), p.31

Impington Village College [29], built 1936-39, is probably the best known British project in the catalogue of Gropius' work.[53] The planning of the school was largely determined by the underlying pedagogic programme. The complex consists of a wedge-shaped assembly hall, or theatre, its stage end integrated into a 2-storeyed art wing with work shops and studios. Because of their height, shape and position at the main approach of the College, the hall and art block form the compositional focus of the complex, which could indicate an ideological emphasis on communal and artistic aspects within the educational programme. At right angles to the art wing is a central promenade, the spine of the plan, on which are located the cloakrooms, toilets and rooms for staff, warden and caretaker. At the end of this corridor a science laboratory is located, whence a row of five classrooms, accessed from under a covered walkway, stretches south-westward. The irregular U-shape of these three wings, framing a grassed yard, is balanced on the north-eastern side with a wing containing the adult provisions, terminating in the library. The slight curve of this adult wing both adds a dynamic element of tension to the design and functions as a balance to the long stretch of classrooms on the opposite side and end of the central promenade. Further curved elements are introduced in the convex main façade of the assembly hall, the corners of a recess facing onto the southern yard and in details such as the edges of the buttresses dividing the classrooms on the eastern façade.

[53] At first, the school was not planned for Impington, but its neighbouring village Histon. After a good deal of dispute over the location of the College and the land it was to be built on, the final choice fell on Impington, which critics considered too close to Cambridge.

Overall, the plan is based on a carefully balanced asymmetry into which are injected elements of movement. Much of the layout is determined by the patterns of circulation described by the users of the building;[54] physical movement is articulated architecturally in long stretches of connected walkways and promenades. Taking into account the varied functions of the College, Gropius and Fry provided multiple access: the building can be entered via the assembly hall or central promenade, though the latter entrance is somewhat awkwardly hidden behind the projecting wedge of the hall. For the school children, there are lockers in the central hallway, from where separate exits for boys and girls lead outside, past the toilets and cloak rooms, presumably in order to ensure efficient circulation at break times. All elevations are in yellow-brown brick, set off with accents in red brick. The classrooms are fully glazed on the south-eastern façade.

In many respects, the school at Impington represents a transitional period in Gropius' work and career. The design ideas introduced here provide a link with both his past and future architecture. The sprawling plan, consisting of long stretched-out wings of varying heights arranged at right angles to each other, had already made its famous first appearance in the Dessau Bauhaus. Its underlying principle then re-appeared in slight variations in the plans of several unexecuted designs before emigration, most of them educational buildings, such as the 1929 Hagen Engineering School or the 1930 Vocational School in Berlin-Köpenick. The wedge shape of the Impington assembly hall had also been tried before by Gropius in his 1934 designs for the Houses of Labour, which included a theatre and

[54] The importance of circulation for design had been emphasised and formally analysed by many

assembly hall of the same shape, albeit in larger and free-standing form. However, it was only in Britain that Gropius, under the influence of his new working environment and to some extent perhaps the ideas of his partner Fry, developed the ideas explored at Impington into a firm new principle. Thus many elements of the Village College were to re-appear frequently in Gropius' American work, both public and domestic designs: the right-angled sprawling plan with a slightly curved wing for added tension, for instance, can be found again in his projects for the Wheaton College Art Centre (1938), a recreation centre in Key West, Florida (1941-42) and the Harvard Graduate Centre in Cambridge, Massachusetts (1948-50). The covered walkways became a standard feature in his educational buildings,[55] and the wedge-shaped hall also recurred several more times.

On a more abstract level, too, the Impington experience was crucial for further developments in Gropius' work: it marked the beginning of a New Contextualism, that is a step away from the rigid formulas of *Neues Bauen* towards an architecture that paid attention to its context. It illustrates the fact that Gropius had distanced himself from the forceful internationalism which he and the Bauhaus had represented, and that instead he had begun to make concessions to regional characteristics and national traditions and tastes. At Impington, this is clearly shown in the use of brick (the traditional English building material) in a soft colour typical of the region. A transitional quality is also evident in the fenestration: blending elements of International Modernism and indigenous architectural traditions, on one

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European modernist architects in the inter-war period, above all Le Corbusier.

[55] As can be seen in the Harvard Graduate Centre, in the project for Hua Tung Christian University in Shanghai (1946) or in Peter Thatcher Junior High School in Attleboro/Mass. (1947-51).

side of the curved adult wing Gropius used thin modernist overhead strip windows to illuminate the corridor, while the façade on the other side featured a row of ten bay windows [29a]. This latter, very English feature, widely associated with domestic living rooms, was presumably introduced by the architects not only in order to add 3-dimensional depth to the elevation, but also to give an appearance of domestic comfort to the interior of the common and recreational rooms of the College. The treatment of this bay-windowed façade deviates sharply from the stylistic canon of Continental modernism as well as from Gropius' own work up to this point and can be regarded as evidence of a direct response to British building traditions.

The origins of Gropius' movement towards a new contextual, even 'humanising', approach to modern architecture, which is evident in the general loosening of forms and plan of the school at Impington, have intrigued many scholars. Nikolaus Pevsner was the first to ask: "Can it have been the effect of English picturesque notions on the more rigid intellect of Gropius?",[56] and others have followed his train of thought. Indeed, the Impington design undeniably responds to its rural setting and the picturesquely irregular landscape which surrounds it. The intricate scale and soft materials blend into the natural setting, and the irregular, sprawling layout partially resulted from fitting the architecture into the site as it existed, preserving its natural peculiarities, such as trees and irregularities in the ground, wherever possible. Some scholars have simply attributed this new sensitivity in Gropius' work to the influence of Fry and his sensitivity to native traditions and customs. Yet, as

[56] Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England. Cambridgeshire* (London, 1952-69), p.413

will be demonstrated in Chapter 4.a., Fry's own architecture of the period shows far less such sensitivity, whereas Gropius, with this and another commission at Kent, had seemingly entered a phase characterised by a willingness to adapt and experiment. However, Pevsner's notion that Gropius' New Contextualism at Impington was the result of an unconscious process of assimilation, or even the emergence of an actual preference for picturesque traditions, has to be treated with caution. Given the calculating and somewhat opportunistic traits in Gropius' character, as identified above, it is more likely that the adjustments in the Impington design were strategic ones, and sprang from a desire for commercial success and architectural recognition in Britain. At Windsor, a photomontage in the sales brochure was to demonstrate how the architecture would integrate into the existing picturesque park land; at Impington the sales pitch has become reality. During the two years between the projects Gropius had learned, through repeated disappointments, that the only way to success was to accept the strength of British traditions and tastes and to adapt his architecture to them. By producing less 'rigid', more 'picturesque' architecture, Gropius thus tried to insure himself against another failure and to achieve the long-sought acceptance and recognition in Britain.

This proved a successful strategy. Impington Village College, which was only completed under the auspices of Max Fry after Gropius had left for Harvard, has been hailed as a milestone in educational architecture and the development of modernism in general. Pevsner has described it as "one of the best buildings of its date in England, if not the best,"[57] believing that "here the style of the twentieth

[57] ibid.

century found an ideal expression, in its austerity of forms but humanising of these forms by their free and happy grouping and their placing amid lawn and trees."[58]

Yet, it should not be forgotten that Impington was not wholly original in its design, not only in terms of Gropius' German work, but also within the context of the Village Colleges built before Impington. These, and in particular the designs by S. E. Urwin, already set out the main elements which characterised the building by Gropius and Fry: the sprawling plan based on stretched-out arms abutting at right angles, the creation of semi-enclosed outer spaces by these means, the horizontal emphasis achieved by banded windows and low volumes, the extensive glazing concentrated in classroom areas, as well as the long covered walkways.[59]

Furthermore, while it is true that many of the principles explored at Impington were influential for later architectural developments in Britain (see 4.b. and [94]), when considering it within the bigger architectural picture Impington appears not so much a watershed, but simply part of a wider contemporary trend towards a 'humanisation' of modernism.

From around 1930 onwards the international modern movement had begun to see changes in its vocabulary. The rigid canon of the International Style, developed during the 1920s, was increasingly loosened. Distancing themselves from the purely machinist image, modern architects began to "shift ... towards various schemes of 'bio-technical' thinking"[60] and to incorporate looser, more organic forms into their designs. At the same time they abandoned the exclusive preoccupation

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[58] ibid., p.237

[59] Some of these ideas had already been proposed in British school buildings of the 1920s, such as Morley Horder's St. Christopher School at Letchworth.

with internationalism in favour of a new interest in national and regional architectural traditions. The playful juxtaposition and blend of these opposing elements became a characteristic of much of 1930s modernism in parts of Europe and especially in America. Architects like Le Corbusier, Mies and F. L. Wright began to incorporate this new dialectic between 'natural' and 'mechanical' forces into their architectural language. Most importantly, the issue of materials now gained more interest than before in modern architecture, and a breadth of natural materials - hitherto largely ignored[61] - now put in an appearance. The rubble walls in Le Corbusier's Pavilion Suisse (1930-31) or his Maison de Mandrot (1929-32), or the side-by-side existence of rough natural stone and smooth concrete in Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater (1934-37) illustrate this development.

Although Britain had only just come to terms with the International Style by the time the rest of Europe began to re-interpret its vocabulary, British modernists soon adopted the new trend. Identified by Gould as the 'Third Movement', during 1936-39 Britain, too, turned towards a "frank use of native organic materials - brick, stone and timber - for Modern architecture."[62] Thus it is possible that Gropius, aware of the these national and international developments, felt the need not to lag behind when he came to design Impington Village College with Fry. He may have felt that,

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[60] William J. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (London, 1982), p.306

[61] Before the International Style elevated concrete to the status of the premier building material of the modern architect, brick had been popular; early modern pioneers such as Behrens, Berlage or Bonatz had all used exposed weight-bearing brick as a favourite construction medium. Many of the great modernists, including Le Corbusier and Gropius, had begun their careers with buildings in exposed brick; and brick had also found its way into the European modern movement in the 1920s, when it was especially popular in Holland and Scandinavia, as well as the northern regions of Germany (where it often appeared in Expressionist architecture). Mendelsohn's Schocken store in Stuttgart of 1926 was in brick, as were Mies van der Rohe's Krefeld houses of the late 1920s, and

given his position within the modern movement, he had to keep up with the latest trends in order to retain his position within the international vanguard of architecture. In other words, he may not have wanted to be seen building in the International Style when other members of the profession had progressed beyond it. Thus the stylistic changes at Impington, including the response to British picturesque traditions, could be seen as Gropius' answer to the loosening of forms and the incorporation of regional traditions evident in contemporary architecture.

Gropius' pre-occupation with looser forms and natural materials during those years is also evident in a house he designed in 1937 for Jack and Frances Donaldson in the village of Shipbourne in Kent [30a-c]. This house, usually called the Wood House, is a timber-frame construction with timber-clad elevations and a mono-pitched roof at a subtle angle. The wood used for the cladding was a dark-coloured, untreated Canadian cedar which changed its hue slightly with the seasons. Despite its 'natural' appearance, Gropius and Donaldson had initially experienced problems in obtaining planning permission from the local authorities.[63] According to Maxwell Fry, Gropius did not design the Wood House in collaboration with his English partner, but with the German architect Albrecht Proskauer, who had joined Gropius in London as a chief draftsman (see 2.b.).[64] Gropius' design for the Wood House was to a large extent determined by the clients, who "told him exactly what [they]

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many architects of *Neues Bauen*, such as Gutkind in Berlin, predominantly designed housing in this material.

[62] Jeremy Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain, 1919-1939* (London, 1977), p.22

[63] Only after the intervention of the Ministry of Health permission was finally given (see 2.b.).

[64] See Maxwell Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches* (London, 1975). Proskauer's involvement with the Wood House design is further sustained by the fact that around the same time, in 1936, he was building a wooden house himself, in collaboration with Le Mare, at Redbridge, Essex [31].

wanted"[65]: a house which fitted their lifestyle and requirements. Their preferences for modern living, particularly outdoor living, coincided happily with the architect's ideas. The design thus merges exterior and interior architectural space by pulling inside living functions out into the open, creating porches for sleeping, verandas for seating and a big open terrace overlooking meadows and woodland. The main living areas are housed in a two-storey block, facing south to make further use of the views, from which a slim wing containing guest rooms radiates at right angles. From this basic L-shaped plan a number of elements protrude outwards: garage, entrance portico,[66] angled balcony, outside staircase, bay extensions to the nursery. A conscious effort to move away from the stiff, boxy idiom and clichéd forms of the International Style is also evident in the elevations. The rectangular main volume of the house is broken up by the cut-out porch and balcony on one corner and projection of the nursery on the other. The balcony is pulled out on the corner to break away from the box and right-angled forms. The same is true of the mono-pitched roof, which juts southwards, forming broad overhanging eaves. Its shallow angle is echoed in the smaller westward roofs of the garage and the entrance porch. The terrace is framed on the south-western corner with a glass screen describing a curve. Although many of the elements used in the Wood House echo those in the Levy House of only two years previously, Gropius' ideas have unmistakably undergone major changes during that time: he has dropped previous stylistic dogmatism in favour of loosened forms, attention to context and a new approach to materials.

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[65] Frances Donaldson, *Child of the Twenties* (London, 1959), p.179

The choice of wood as a building material in particular deserves closer attention. Gropius had gained some experience with wooden structures at an earlier point in his career, when in 1920-21 he built an all-wood residence for the Berlin businessman and sawmill owner Sommerfeld, as well as a few other examples of timber-framed or -clad domestic architecture in Berlin, such as the house Stöckle of 1921. But after that his career had been centred around the exploration of the new materials of concrete, steel and glass. Yet, fifteen years later, when he was invited to give a speech at the 1936 prize-giving luncheon of the 'All Timber House Competition' (for which Fry had been one of the assessors), Gropius unexpectedly re-articulated a belief in the suitability of wood for modern architecture:

> It amuses me that I who am suspected of being a fanatic in the matter of rationalised building technique should be honoured with an invitation to say a few words about wooden structures... The modern form of a building is only conditionally dependent on the newness of the construction material. The wooden structure is the earliest form of a skeleton construction and it has a close relationship to skeletons in steel and reinforced concrete of today. Horizontal fenestration, the 'ribbon window', which is such a significant feature of modern architecture, is often characteristic also of wooden skeleton construction, in contrast to the brick building, unless the brick is combined with steel..."[67]

Wooden construction is thus presented as the natural forerunner of modernist structures in steel-frames and reinforced concrete, and hence a suitable material for contemporary design. The Wood House, it seems, was built to prove this point. Its exposed roof rafters and vertical frame members express the construction of the

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[66] This thin, up-tilted portico, sometimes supported on two thin columns, made its first appearance in England (at Impington, in the Denham Film Laboratories and in the Donaldson house) and subsequently became a standard feature in Gropius' American work.
[67] Quoted in Elliott, "Gropius in England...", p.121

building with a frankness reminiscent of Gropius' earliest work and the ideas of his teacher Behrens. But where lay the origins of Gropius' new open-mindedness regarding materials and regional architectural traditions? Frances Donaldson, client of the Wood House, assures us that Gropius "built the house in wood because he liked to build in materials natural in the district, and in Kent these timbered houses are often seen."[68] However, Gropius had not previously been in the habit of adapting his architecture to the surrounding environment in such a fashion - it was only in Britain that he re-discovered wood and other natural materials, the use of which later became a trademark of his and Breuer's early American practice [32, 37]. Significantly, this conversion to natural materials and softer forms coincided with a period in Gropius' career when he was most desperate to re-establish himself after emigration and to find acceptance in Britain, as well as with a period of transformation within the modern movement, as explained above. Additionally, timber framing had started to receive increased attention in the British profession the very months before Gropius' Kent commission, subsequently becoming rather fashionable in modern architecture.[69] Thus the response to Kentish building traditions may only have been a by-product of a choice motivated mainly by Gropius' response to wider national and international trends in modernism and his desire to establish himself in Britain.

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[68] Donaldson, *Child of the Twenties*, p.180

[69] The 'All Timber House Competition', launched in 1936 by the Timber Development Association, received entries from over 200 architects and was widely covered in architecture and building journals. In 1939, the *Architectural Review* published a special review of wood houses in England. For examples of modernist timber houses in Britain see also the 'Frame' section in F. R. S. Yorke, *The Modern House in England* (London, 1937).

Conceptually, the Wood House and Impington Village College represent two things: Gropius' realisation of the potential of traditional materials for modern architecture, and his recognition and acceptance of the necessity to adapt modernist principles to any given condition. (Both these notions later found their full expression in Gropius' American work [32].) In Britain, Gropius dropped his earlier belief in the exclusive suitability of new (industrial) materials for new architecture with his new proclamation that "The really creative architect does not tie himself up with only some special materials."[70] That he retrospectively wrapped his actions (that is the design changes caused largely by his difficult position after emigration) in grand ideological superstructures was typical of Gropius. As we will see, many other German architects, including Breuer, Fränkel, Kaufmann and Proskauer, also began to turn to traditional materials after their emigration to Britain, but none of them felt it necessary to justify their departure from previous design principles by elevating it to a new dogma in the way which Gropius did.

Gropius' exploration of a wide variety of materials and construction methods in his British architecture[71] also carried over into the interiors and objects he designed while in Britain. Thus for Pritchard's Isokon firm he experimented with plywood, and for Luminium Ltd. he designed furniture and other objects in aluminium.[72] In a shop

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[70] Quoted in Elliott, "Gropius in England...", p.121

[71] Apart from the rough cedar wood in the house in Kent and the weight-bearing exposed brick at Impington Village College (where he also used tiles), Gropius used a steel-frame for his Windsor project, reinforced concrete for his Denham Film Studios, and limestone cladding and glass bricks at for the Christ's College design.

[72] Luminium Ltd. was a firm specialised in the production of aluminium objects, directed by Whitney Straight, for which Gropius worked briefly and unsuccessfully in 1935. Shortly after, he became supervisor of design at Pritchard's Isokon Ltd. For some information on Gropius' design work in England see Elena Ferrari, *Isokon - Il contributo di J. Pritchard alla storia del movimento moderno in Gran Bretagna,* unpublished thesis (Florence University, 1990).

design for Mortimer Gall Electrical Co. of 1936 he appropriately used steel, glass and glass bricks to achieve a modern, industrial appearance reminiscent of the typical Bauhaus interior. But it is another (generally overlooked) interior in Gropius' British work which best summarises his newly developed tendencies towards contextualism and a softening of forms: the 'Flat of '37', an exhibition flat executed for Kendal Milne & Co. of Manchester [33]. In an effort to apply modern design to the British context, the architect here "addressed his attention to the very difficult task of making English people feel comfortable and at home."[73] Having discovered the importance of comfort and cosiness in the Englishman's assessment of interiors, Gropius adjusted his design accordingly, creating what Gloag has called "the beginning of the modern movement in comfort."[74] The 'Flat of '37' has moved away from the machinist, angular language of the Bauhaus days towards a modernism which allows for softer forms:

> We are trying to build up a twentieth-century style in furniture instead of imitating earlier times. But that does not mean that everything must be in cubes. You will notice that the corners of the room are rounded and that the furniture has curves.[75]

The softness of forms is echoed in the materials and colours used. A variety of woods (Teak, Cedar, Japanese Oak et al.) and other materials (including upholstery fabric) used for furniture, walls and floors radiate warmth and comfort, an impression intensified by the chosen colour schemes: unobtrusive tones of brown, beige and cream, enhanced by indirect lighting and the "warm glow" of the

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[73] John Gloag in a speech at the opening of the exhibition. PA (UEA), PP/24/4/30, p.1
[74] ibid, p.3
[75] Walter Gropius, quoted in article "Manchester Sees German Idea", in *The Manchester Evening News*, Feb. 8th, 1937. PA (UEA), PP/24/2/38

"cunningly lit glass hearth"[76] of the electric fire. The wooden furniture is to a large part built-in and in general designed for maximum efficiency, but little else betrays the coolly efficient mode of the interiors Gropius designed in the 1920s in Germany.

Gropius' work in Britain, in summary, is the work of an architect trapped between many strong and contradictory forces. On the one hand there was his great reputation, based on the Bauhaus and his work of the 1920s, which generated high hopes on his part and that of the profession in Britain. British architects expected to see a continuation of Gropius' pre-emigration style in their own country, while Gropius hoped to be able to retain his position as a leading international modernist.[77] On the other hand, however, there were limiting realities: Gropius' need to sustain himself financially as an émigré, Britain's unresponsiveness to his more radical ideas and the strength of prevailing British architectural traditions. A third influence came in the form of national and architectural trends, to which the architect had to respond if he wanted to keep his position in the vanguard of architectural modernism. Gropius' British work, and the stylistic transition from International Style to New Contextualism, is the result of his attempt to reconcile all these opposing forces and to synthesise his German experiences with his new British environment.

After he left Britain in 1937, the new tendencies in Gropius' British work, which I have summarised under the term New Contextualism, carried over into his work in

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[76] Press release: "The Flat of '37", PA (UEA), PP/24/40/21

[77] Professional expectations and a concern about marring his modernist integrity and thus future career were important factors for Gropius. This is also illustrated in the fact that throughout his

the USA. Together with his new partner Marcel Breuer, whose work in Britain had taken a similar direction to Gropius' (see 3.a.iii.), he now began to design buildings based on the fusion of regional elements, such as local stone or traditional timber construction, with the vocabulary of the International Style. Gropius had been impressed with American Colonial houses, which he described as "entirely in our spirit in simplicity, functionality and uniformity."[78] (It is interesting to recall that he had made virtually the same comments about the British Georgian house two years previously.) By "adapting the modern idiom to the carpentered vernacular of New England and to the fieldstone masonry of its boulder-bounded fields"[79] Gropius and Breuer developed what came to be known as the Bay Area Style, and soon established themselves as central figures of 'New Regionalism', a trend which gripped American architecture in the 1930s. Buildings such as Gropius' own house of 1938 or the 1938-39 house for James Ford [32], both in Lincoln, Massachusetts, reveal the synthesising tendencies which Gropius later turned into a life philosophy when he came to summarise his life's work under the heading 'Unity in Diversity'.[80] However, it is important to remember that the origins of Gropius' American approach lay in his British experiences. Many parallels and connections could be drawn between his British designs and his early American work,[81] but the most

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lifetime he suppressed the publication of the Denham Film Laboratories, an unexciting concrete building in London of 1936, because he felt it could harm his professional image.

[78] Letter Gropius to Breuer, Sept. 1937, quoted in Nerdinger, *Gropius*, exhibition cat., p.194

[79] William Jordy, "The Aftermath of the Bauhaus in America: Gropius, Mies and Breuer", in Donald Fleming & Bernard Bailyn (eds.), *The Intellectual Migration - Europe and America 1930-1960* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p.499. On this see also William Jordy, "The Domestication of Modern: Marcel Breuer's Ferry Cooperative Dormitory", in *American Buildings and Their Architects* (New York, 1976), p.170

[80] See his article "Unity in Diversity", in *Architectural Record*, Vol.CXXIX, April 1961, p.9

[81] The sprawling layout, wedge-shaped auditorium and other planning ideas explored at Impington, for example, re-appear in Gropius' 1938 competition projects for arts centres at Wheaton College, Norton, and William and Mary College, Williamsburg. The 'dissecting' walls used at Impington are transcribed into stone and turned into a trademark of the partnership's early American houses. The

important thing Gropius imported was his new flexibility and his willingness to pay attention to landscape and regional traditions; Britain had sensitised the German architect to the importance and the potential of context.

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interest in timber-framed construction, rekindled with the Donaldson House, also reaches its full potential in Gropius' domestic work in the USA. As regards town planning, the architects' new preference for organic irregularity and informal layouts suggests the influence of British picturesque traditions, possibly even Garden City ideas.

## 3.a.iii. Marcel Breuer

Many of the tendencies which characterise Gropius' work in Britain emerge at an early stage and in a more pronounced form in the British work of Marcel Breuer. Breuer, a young Hungarian designer, had been a close friend of Gropius since his apprenticeship and later work as a master of furniture at the Bauhaus in Dessau.[1] Having established himself as a private architect in Berlin after leaving the Bauhaus in 1928, he left Germany after the Nazi take-over in 1933, uncertain about where to settle next. For a while he lived "suspended in a Hungarian-Swiss-Britannic void",[2] travelling and working in Switzerland and Budapest simultaneously. He finally emigrated to Britain in August 1935, a year after Gropius' arrival in Britain. Breuer had decided to move to Britain on the strength of an arrangement with the British modernist F. R. S. Yorke, who had agreed to take him into architectural partnership. He worked with Yorke until the autumn of 1937 when he left Britain for the USA following an invitation from Gropius to join him as a partner in architectural practice and teacher at Harvard. Although Breuer's stay in Britain was very short, it is perhaps the most interesting phase in his whole career, for he not only made a breakthrough in establishing himself as an architect (rather than a designer of furniture and interiors only), but his stylistic language and approach to design underwent drastic changes during the period. This makes it surprising that, despite there being several general surveys of the architect's work, no comprehensive, in-

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[1] Born in 1902, Breuer had begun his apprenticeship at the Bauhaus in 1920, having left a scholarship for the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna after only a few months. Having qualified in 1924, he went to work in Paris, returning the following year to become head of the furniture workshop as a 'Young Master'. He left the Bauhaus in 1928, at the same time as Gropius. Breuer then opened an architect's office centred around furniture and interiors.

[2] Marcel Breuer in a letter to Ise Gropius, May 22nd, 1935, BHA, cited in Magdalene Droste & Manfred Ludewig, *Marcel Breuer* (Cologne, 1994), p.28

depth study about his English work exists as yet. The following chapter is intended to fill at least part of this gap.

What is perhaps most remarkable about Breuer's British phase is his versatility. During his two years in Britain, Breuer applied himself to furniture design, interior design and architecture, and, as we will see, produced work of quality and conviction in each of these fields. Influenced by his new working environment, Breuer produced a great variety of new designs which sprung from the belief that, in his own words, he "had to adapt [his] Continental experience and teaching to modern English conditions".[3] His work in Britain, more emphatically than anybody else's, was the work of a transitional period: the connecting piece between his German and his American work. It was a phase in which he summarised his past ideas and wedded them to the beginnings of future ones. It was also a phase in which he freed himself from the restricted canon of German modernism and opened the door to new forms of expression that would come to be associated with the characteristic style of Breuer's work in the States. Like Mendelsohn and Gropius, Breuer remained utterly faithful to the idea of modernism. Yet, he was quicker at recognising both the necessity for a greater degree of flexibility and the opportunity to catch up with the latest developments in European avant-garde architecture. He thus turned a period of transition to his own advantage.

As the name of Marcel Breuer is most frequently associated with tubular steel furniture, thanks to his work at the Bauhaus,[4] his work in Britain is generally

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[3] Marcel Breuer, "A House at Bristol", in *Design for To-day*, Vol.3, Dec. 1935, p.459

[4] His experiments as an apprentice and master at the Bauhaus produced some of the earliest pieces of tubular steel furniture in Europe. Among the many models of chairs he developed his

remembered best by his furniture designs in bent plywood for Isokon. Isokon, a London firm for modern design founded in 1931 by Jack Pritchard, had established its furniture wing at the end of 1935: the Isokon Furniture Company. For this branch Pritchard recruited Breuer - in response to Gropius' emphatic recommendations - as one of its main designers. In the original memorandum for the new furniture company, Pritchard specified his approach to furniture design:

> The principal material to be used in the preliminary work must be plywood... Metal may be incorporated only where it performs a function better than plywood...
> In chairs, comfort will be the objective. Much of recent modern furniture has failed to give the traditional English comfort though its form and shape has been pleasing...[5]

Thus Breuer exclaimed "Plywood ahoy!"[6] and set about his new task of remodelling his austere metal furniture of the German period according to British ideas of "comfort" - an adaptation which was seen as necessary in order to make Isokon furniture appeal to the British market. Indeed, during his English period the idea of making furniture "as comfortable as possible"[7] became Breuer's prime design objective and can be seen as his main concession to the new working environment in the field of furniture and interior design. The prerequisite for added comfort in the English furniture was the use of wood (a warmer material than metal) in combination with a variety of soft upholstery fabrics, and the exploration of new forms which were more closely shaped to the body. Probably the most famous of Breuer's British designs was the Isokon long

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1927-28 model No.33, a 'swinger' produced by Thonet, proved the most successful and remains in production.

[5] Jack Pritchard, memorandum for Isokon Furniture Company, PA (UEA), cited in Christopher Wilk, *Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors* (London, 1981), p.129

[6] Breuer used this phrase as an opening greeting in a letter sent to Gropius in England in November 1935. Cited in Droste & Ludewig, *Marcel Breuer*, p.28

chair [34b]. The first of these reclining lounge chairs was produced early in 1936 and was followed by many variations on the theme, all with bent plywood frames and seats, some with added upholstery. In his Isokon designs, Breuer applied his experiences with tubular steel and aluminium furniture to the new material. Interestingly, the original idea for the Isokon lounge chair had come not from Breuer himself, but from Gropius, who had recognised plywood potential in an aluminium lounge chair Breuer had designed during the period he was working for the Swiss firm *Wohnbedarf* [34a].[8] Modelled on already existing prototypes,[9] the Isokon plywood chairs were the result of a translation of a previously conceived idea into a different material.[10] The original Breuer lounge chair itself was not without precedent, but is likely to have been inspired by Le Corbusier's reclining chair in tubular steel of 1928. Breuer is known to have been an admirer of Le Corbusier's: in 1924-25 he had had the chance to see some of his work at first hand during a short period of work in Paris. After this, Corbusian elements occurred with frequency in the Hungarian's work, as will be demonstrated below in relation to his architectural designs. In addition to the reclining chairs, Breuer's work for Isokon included tables, side chairs, newspaper racks and other work. He also received several commissions from the furniture firms Heal & Son and Gane Ltd.

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[7] Marcel Breuer in "8 Architects on Exhibition", in *Trends in Design*, Vol.1, No.2, Summer 1936, p.111

[8] *Wohnbedarf* was a firm run by Sigfried Giedion and other Swiss Werkbund members. Its stores in Zurich and Basel sold furniture designed by modernist architects, including Breuer, Le Corbusier and Aalto. The long aluminium reclining chair (of which Breuer later reproduced a model for Crofton Gane at his Bristol home) was first exhibited in 1932 at the Neubühl *Siedlung* of the Swiss Werkbund.

[9] The same is true for a shorter plywood model, the 'Isokon Short Chair', which also had a prototype amongst the aluminium furniture Breuer had designed for *Wohnbedarf.*

[10] Defending the fact that he liked to repeat his designs, Breuer wrote in 1936: "It is surely wrong to expect an architect always to design something radically different from all that has gone before. ... If the original design has proved itself satisfactory, then it is surely logical to continue using it until it becomes possible to devise another quite new and far more satisfactory alternative." ("8 Architects on Exhibition", p.111)

Despite an obvious reliance on ideas developed in Germany, while working in Britain Breuer transformed his furniture design, as well as his architecture and interiors, in such a way that he arrived in the United States with a new, highly individual design idiom. His innovations, however, were not achieved overnight, but through gradual modifications: each new design rested on previous results. The main change in Breuer's work during 1935-37 concerned the use of materials. In his furniture, there was a shift away from artificial materials, mainly metal, glass and plastic, towards natural ones, including wood, leather and fabrics. Although Breuer had already begun to widen his range of materials before coming to Britain - his first furniture experiments in aluminium and wood (including the work for *Wohnbedarf*) can be dated around 1930 - it was only after coming to Britain that he started to articulate the materials he was now using fully and honestly. At the Harnischmacher house of 1932, for instance, he had used wood, but covered it in a lacquer in order to achieve the stark colour contrasts, shiny surfaces and overall effect of cool machine rationalism typical of his 1920s interiors, whereas by the time he came to design the Gane house in Bristol[11] and the Ventris apartment in London[12] [35] in 1936 and '37, Breuer was not only freely combining all previously explored materials, but he had also softened the look of his interiors. Wood now showed its natural surface and colour, fabrics and upholstery appeared more frequently, as did carpets, curtains and wallpaper, and colour schemes were no longer confined to primary colours. A 'softer' appearance is also evident in the shapes: curvaceous and often

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[11] See Marcel Breuer, "A House at Bristol", in *Design for To*-Day, Vol.3, Dec. 1935, pp.459-462 and *The Architectural Review*, decoration supplement, April 1936, pp.139-142.

[12] See *The Architectural Review*, No.81, April 4th, 1937, pp.192ff. Other interiors Breuer designed during his time in Britain include furniture for Heal's '8 Architects on Exhibition' and

closely modelled to the forms of the body, Breuer's furniture had become more biomorphic, even organic.[13] The old cubist forms and light tubular steel cantilever chairs now appeared side by side with curvilinear long chairs and corpulent armchairs and sofas. The sofas featured freely cut out, curved wooden shapes as structural supports, which during 1936 had gradually replaced the metal-derived plywood frame in Breuer's designs.[14]

Breuer's British interiors are, in summary, more eclectic, more cosy and more private than those designed in Germany. This development was probably the direct result of the architects' conscious adaptation of his designs to what he perceived as the demands of his new working environment and British clientele. However, his capacities as a designer ensured that while he made certain concessions to British ideas about comfort in the widest sense, he nevertheless created strikingly original forms. In other words, Breuer's furniture of the British period fulfilled both the request for "traditional English comfort" and the demand for "pleasing modern forms and shapes" that Pritchard had made in the first Isokon memorandum.[15]

The changes in Breuer's furniture design during his time in Britain are in many respects echoed in his architecture. Here, too, elements of continuity with his pre-1935 work accompany the introduction of new ideas. When looking at Breuer's architecture of 1935-37, it should be kept in mind that on arrival in

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the Isobar Club at Wells Coates' Lawn Road Flats in Hampstead (*The Architectural Review*, decoration supplement, June 1938, p.313).

[13] With this, he anticipated the developments in American furniture design in which 'organic furniture' experienced a heyday in the 1940s.

[14] These weight-bearing wooden planes with sweeping outlines later became a trademark of Breuer's American furniture design.

[15] As expressed in the above cited memorandum for the Isokon Furniture Company.

Britain he was - in practice - not a very experienced architect. Although the catalogue of his architectural designs of the period 1920-35 is extensive, only two of these architectural projects had actually been executed: the Harnischmacher house in Wiesbaden of 1932 and the Doldertal flats in Zurich of 1934 [36], the latter designed in collaboration with Emil and Alfred Roth. Stylistically, these two buildings followed the canon of the International Style of the 1920s, featuring all the typical elements: flat roofs and white-washed concrete-look walls, large horizontal window spaces, free and unadorned façades, roof terraces and balconies, rectangular volumes raised above ground on *pilotis*. Breuer was unmistakably influenced by Corbusian principles.[16] The contrast of the Harnischmacher and Doldertal residences, then, with Breuer's early American houses, designed in collaboration with Gropius,[17] could scarcely be starker. Here, the cool, machinist image of *Neues Bauen* was ingeniously fused with traditional indigenous techniques and materials. Constructed with a traditional New England braced frame, buildings such as the Fischer and Haggerty houses of 1938 [37] appear more compact and more firmly rooted to the ground, their weightiness underlined by thick walls of irregularly shaped local stone, which contrast heavily with the smooth, white rendered surfaces of the wooden walls.

Given the stylistic discrepancy between the American houses and the buildings in Germany and Switzerland, it is obvious that important changes have taken

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[16] In fact, the architect followed Le Corbusier's 'Five Points of a New Architecture' so closely that the Harnischmacher house has been called "Breuer's Poissy". See for example Peter Blake, *Marcel Breuer: Architect and Designer* (New York, 1949), p.40

[17] However, it is well established that Breuer's input into the designs of the partnership was far greater than Gropius'. See Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius - Zeichnungen, Pläne, Photos, Werkverzeichnis*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1985), pp.271ff. and pp.310ff., and Joachim Driller, *Marcel Breuer: die Wohnhäuser 1923-73* (Stuttgart, 1998), pp.87ff.

place in Breuer's approach to architecture between 1934 and 1938. As in his furniture, the main clue to the transformation in Breuer's architecture lies in his attitude to and use of materials. Since the beginning of his career and the research into tubular steel at the Bauhaus, the name of Breuer had been associated with the experimental exploration of new materials. Throughout the 1920s and '30s he had advocated the use of industrially produced materials: reinforced concrete, glass and steel, and also aluminium, rubber and asbestos. By the time he had moved to Britain, this interest had expanded to traditional and natural materials; Breuer now was convinced that modern architecture did not necessarily have to be executed in reinforced concrete, and that, *vice versa*, the use of concrete alone did not ensure the creation of good modern architecture. He recognised that certain forms of traditional architecture, and traditional materials, had something to offer for modern architecture. Breuer, much earlier and much more than Gropius or any other émigré architect, actively and explicitly engaged with the question of materials. In his essay "Where do we stand?", published in the *Architectural Review* in 1935, he makes almost placatory concessions to traditionalism:

> ...modern architects have the sincerest admiration and love for genuine national art, for old peasant houses as for the master pieces of the great epochs in art,... ...vernacular architecture, or national art, and the Modern Movement... have two characteristics in common: the impersonal character of their forms; and a tendency to develop along typical, rational lines that are unaffected by passing fashions.[18]

[18] Marcel Breuer, "Where do we stand?", in *Architectural Review*, Vol.77, April 1935, p.133. This text was first delivered as a lecture under the same title at the Zurich Museum of Arts and Crafts in April 1934.

Two years later, Breuer made his views on the topic of materials even more explicit to the British public in an essay entitled "Architecture and Material": [19]

> The basis of modern architecture, however, is not the new materials, nor even the new form, but the new mentality... Thus modern architecture would exist even without reinforced concrete, plywood or linoleum. It would exist even in stone, wood and brick. It is important especially to emphasise this because the doctrinaire and unselective use of the new materials is not only harmful to the prestige of the modern movement, but falsifies also the basic principles of our work.[20]

The essay was illustrated with examples from Breuer's own work. On the last page, the author underlined his point about the adaptability of modern design to a variety of materials by illustrating side by side two of his British designs, both of 1936: the model for the 'Garden City of the Future', a *tour de force* in reinforced concrete, and the show pavilion for Gane at Bristol, executed in natural stone. Both of these designs will be discussed below.

Prior to these projects, Breuer became involved in a commissions for two masters' houses at Eton College on which his partner F. R. S. Yorke was working at the time. These buildings, completed in 1938 [38a,b], were two identical 7-bedroom houses for masters on adjoining sites at Eton College. Breuer's role in this commission was to improve an already existing design by Yorke. By simplifying an earlier, L-shaped plan, he created a building of plain design and sober lay-out: two storeys in height, rectangular and flat-roofed, the body of the house is an unbroken box. Careful detailing dominates the otherwise plain elevations. Inside, the rooms are arranged unimaginatively but rationally in

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[19] Published in *Circle* in 1937. See Gabo, N., Nicholson, B. & Martin, J.L. (eds.), *Circle - International Survey of Constructive Art* (New York & Washington, 1971, reprint of original published in 1937). This book, originally intended as the first in a series, was intended by the editors to promote the British contribution to the European modern movement in all the arts.

two bands, with the living areas and main bedrooms facing south towards the garden and services facing north. All doors lead onto a central corridor. The simple regularity of the plan is echoed on the exterior: the garden façade consists of two parallel bands of five windows, all of thin steel frames and set flush with the outside wall surface, one window on the ground floor being extended to form a terrace door. While the width of the windows is equal on both floors, the reduced window height on the first floor echoes the arrangement found on Breuer's Harnischmacher house and adds a subtle dynamic to the façade. Equally, the placing of the terrace, its door and timber-frame pergola to the western end rather than the centre of the façade, visually balanced by the addition of an entrance porch to the east, creates tension and visual interest. Most importantly, however, the elevations of the Eton design were executed in roughly textured, irregularly coloured yellow-brown facing brick.[21] The warm, irregular tones of the brickwork balance and soften the harsh rectangularity and visual regularity of the exterior of the building and anticipate the new engagement with natural materials in the work of both Breuer and Yorke after 1936.

The simple lay-out of the Eton houses [38] and their appearance of being rooted to the ground contrasts with the careful planning of Breuer's Doldertal flats [36] or the light, airy appearance of his Harnischmacher house. His next British design, on the other hand, provides a visual parallel to the German and Swiss

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[20] Marcel Breuer, "Architecture and Material", in Gabo, N. et. al. (eds.), *Circle*, p.194

[21] There are two possible brick prototypes for the Eton houses: while the proportions of the elevations are reminiscent Mies van der Rohe's Esters House at Krefeld of 1927-30 (as pointed out by Powers in *In the Line of Development*, p.19), the general external arrangement strongly resembles a 1936 group of brick houses with mono-pitched roofs at Tewin by Mary Crowley. Randall Evans has suggested that the Eton houses were inspired by the latter (see Joachim Driller, *Marcel Breuer - das architektonische Frühwerk bis 1950*, PhD Dissertation (Freiburg, 1990), p.194).

designs: Sea Lane House at Angmering-on-Sea [39a,b].[22] Developed in four planning stages,[23] the built version of Sea Lane House consists of two adjoining wings arranged in L-form, one two storeys in height containing services and living areas, the other raised on thick *pilotis* to first floor level containing a long stretch of bedrooms. The structure of Sea Lane House is a mixture of reinforced concrete and brick, but all surfaces are rendered white. The angularity of the main body of the house is contrasted with a sweepingly curved terrace in front of dining and living room, S-shaped in outline and supported on a slim column. Many stylistic elements at Angmering point to Breuer's German work and his preference for Corbusian prototypes. The heavy stilts supporting the bedroom wing are similar in shape and size to the Doldertal columns, which are thicker and more oval than those at Wiesbaden - just as the *pilotis* at Le Corbusier's Pavilion Suisse are heavier and flatter than those at his Villa Savoye. And the sculptural, aero-nautical quality of the ramp-like balcony stairs at Angmering are at once reminiscent of the Harnischmacher house and Le Corbusier's Villa Stein. However, while Sea Lane House contains much of Breuer's past architectural ideas, it also points towards his future work: the explicit separation of the building into two wings, one for living, one for sleeping, anticipates the architect's concentration on the idea of "bi-nuclear" living in his American work. A division of the plan into day and night areas can be found for example in his H-house designs of 1943, or the Geller house in Lawrence of 1945. Making simultaneous references to past and future ideas in Breuer's architecture, Sea Lane House represents a work of transition typical of the architect's English

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[22] Although a joint project, Breuer's contribution to its design was significantly higher than Yorke's. For a discussion of attribution within the partnership see 4.a.

[23] Originally, the house was intended to have three storeys, but local planning restrictions and interventions from the local authority stipulated the gradual reduction to two storeys. For the various planning stages see Driller, *Marcel Breuer: die Wohnhäuser* (1998), pp.76-81.

period. In other words, it "constitutes the 'missing link' between Breuer's European and his American work."[24]

The fact that in Britain Breuer was digesting past experience while developing new concepts - which would come to full fruition in the USA - is illustrated best in his design for a 'Garden City of the Future' [40]. This 'Garden City' was a model for a civic centre built in concrete, commissioned by the Cement and Concrete Association (CCA) for the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia of March 1936. Located on an imaginary river, it features residential, educational and recreational buildings as well as a shopping centre and a business district. Most striking about the model are the many references it contains to Breuer's past and future work.[25] The idea of an 'over-and-under crossing' to ease high-speed traffic circulation, for instance, had been prepared by Breuer in a multi-level traffic scheme for the Potsdamer Platz in 1928, and he had already explored the principles of *Zeilenbau*, applied here to the 10-storey residential blocks of flats, in his designs for flats at Spandau-Haselhorst of the same year. The theatre, with its funnel-shaped auditorium, is a near copy of Breuer's Kharkov theatre of 1931, and the overhanging stepped-forward storeys of the shopping centre [40b] have their prototype in Breuer's Eberfeld hospital scheme of 1928-29. Amongst the ideas Breuer was to re-use and develop further in his later work were the bone-shaped (or 'double-Y') multi-storey office blocks, which the architect later linked together in his 1943 'Stuyvesant Six', and the hovering clover-leaf restaurant which re-appeared in 1947 in Argentina.

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[24] Driller, *Marcel Breuer (diss.)*, p.119

[25] Peter Blake, who has listed and illustrated many of the visual parallels, calls the project an "interim report". See Blake, *Marcel Breuer*, p.59.

Additionally, the school building and the semicircular café by the river are based on the same formal idea as a competition design for a school Breuer and Yorke were working on in 1936-37 [41]. This school, designed for a competition launched by the *Architects' Journal* (but not awarded a prize), was based on a fan-shaped, strictly symmetrical plan: from an A-shaped central hall for common functions radiates a row of classrooms arranged in a semicircle, enclosing a playground lined by two covered walkways leading to an administrative building. The project reveals not only a knowledge of a 1926 design for a *Ringschule* (ring school) by Richard Neutra,[26] but also contains elements of Gropius' and Fry's Village College at Impington, which features a fan-shaped assembly hall, a slightly curved adult wing and covered walkways.

The choice of Breuer, an architect with a reputation as a successful explorer of new materials, and Yorke, previously technical editor and correspondent on building materials for the *Architects' Journal*, was highly appropriate: the 'Garden City of the Future' was a *tour de force* in the demonstration of the capacities of concrete as a building material. This way, it successfully advertised the material and the interest group who sponsored the project. The visual and structural masterpiece of the model was the shopping centre [40b]: arranged in a continuous spiral of ramps, the storeys stepped back to form terraces on the inside and an overhang supported by giant concrete buttresses on the outside, it expressed dramatically the sort of innovative structures which new materials and techniques were capable of creating. As an overall scheme, the CCA made explicit at the time, the 'Garden City of the Future' was intended to give "an impression of a principle rather than [to present] an exact arrangement [for a

[26] As pointed out by Driller, *Marcel Breuer (diss.)*, p.355

particular site]"[27], but it was clearly designed with central London in mind. Within the British context, the 'Garden City' was indeed very much "of the Future" - for it was novel not only from a structural, but also from a town planning point of view. It presented the visitor to the Ideal Home exhibition with planning concepts which, originating in France and Germany, had been summed up at the fourth Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in 1933 in the 'Charter of Athens'. Thus Breuer and Yorke defined the main concerns of their scheme as the following:

1. To free the town from congestion, and to let sunlight and clean air penetrate freely between buildings, so that the town is a pleasant and healthy place to work in and to live in. ... Those who live in the city are housed in tall buildings, spaced at sufficient distance to allow sunlight to penetrate between them...
2. To define clearly, and to make possible exact organisation of the various functions of the town.[28]

These ideas clearly echo those laid down in the Athens Charter, which defined the essential "functions of the town" as "living, working, recreation and circulation".[29] Both Breuer and Yorke were obviously up-to-date with contemporary CIAM developments, Breuer through his close connection with the two CIAM leaders Gropius and Giedion,[30] and Yorke through his membership of the MARS group, which had participated in the 1933 CIAM congress.[31]

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[27] As stated in a prospectus by the Cement and Concrete Association, "A Garden City of the Future", reprinted from *The Architect's Journal*, March 26th, 1936, PA (UEA), PP/25/1/3
[28] ibid.
[29] Quoted in William Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (London, 1982), p.255
[30] Giedion, then CIAM's general secretary, was a friend of Breuer's. He was the commissioner of the Doldertal flats and had marketed Breuer's furniture through his Swiss firm *Wohnbedarf* since 1931.
[31] Yorke had been a member of MARS since 1933 and had contributed to the group's preparation for its first appearance at a CIAM congress.

However, in the 'Garden City of the Future' the formalism of CIAM town planning (the rigidity and rectangularity of which is exemplified in schemes such as Le Corbusier's 'Ville Radieuse') has been subtly dissolved and softened through the introduction of curved elements, angles other than $90^0$, and a generally more irregular distribution of buildings on the site, reminiscent of the lay-out of the Budapest Fair park which Breuer designed in 1935 with Fischer and Molnar. This development towards a more picturesque lay-out is very interesting, for it could be interpreted as a concession to British architectural traditions. The choice of name for the project provides a vital clue in this context: by calling the scheme "a modern garden city" after the most influential British achievement in town planning, and giving it a futuristic aspect, the architects at once distanced themselves from the harsh doctrines of CIAM and tried to make a modernist architectural project more acceptable to the British public. As the name indicates, the 'Garden City of the Future' was as much of the future as it was of the past - it attempted a marriage of the most modern and advanced town planning principles in the 1930s with established and accepted ones originating in late nineteenth century England. In other words, the English garden city is here developed further and brought to its logical, up-to-date conclusion. The parallels to the old garden city can be found in the irregular yet systematic lay-out, the concern for health and hygiene ("sunlight and clean air") in the city and the love for open spaces and vistas. Thus there are wide areas of lawns, dotted with trees, ponds and sports fields, in between the high-rise blocks in *Zeilenbau*, and most of the minimal flats have "their own private terrace gardens".[32]

[32] "A Garden City of the Future"

All this, however, was not enough to sell a modernist vision in concrete to the British public. Their unfamiliarity with visionary schemes such as the 'Garden City of the Future' prompted shocked and appalled reactions, and forced Breuer and Yorke to defend their project on many occasions. In response to a bitterly critical letter to the editor of the *Daily Telegraph* by F. R. Bevan, for instance, the architects wrote:

> Sir - we are surprised to hear that Mr. Bevan should think our scheme for a concrete city fantastic, and particularly surprised that anybody living in London or its suburbs should criticise such a scheme on the grounds that the inhabitants would be 'cribbed, cabined and confined'. Having built high - 12 storeys - we are able to leave a much greater percentage of land free than is possible in the present-day city... We assure Mr. Bevan that there is plenty of open ground between the blocks in which bombs could fall without doing any damage... We do not quite understand what Mr. Bevan means when he says 'the cold atmosphere of flats is bad and the people do not mix as do folk out in the country.' We agree that life in flats in the normal modern city that was not planned for such a mode of living cannot be ideal; that is why we have planned a city in a garden... Will Mr. Bevan please... compare [our model] with any half-mile near Aldgate or Islington. He will then see the direction in which we are aiming.[33]

However, Breuer's personal stylistic developments at the time were proceeding in quite different directions. He was now becoming more strongly interested in natural materials. His design for an exhibition show room for modern Gane's furniture at the 1936 Royal Agriculture Show in Bristol [42a,b] pays special tribute to this.[34] This pavilion marks a turning point in Breuer's work: away from the smooth white box towards natural materials, rough surfaces and more open planning. A flat-roofed bungalow, the Bristol pavilion features thick, irregularly shaped and textured local stone walls, floor-to-ceiling glazing, a stone-floored

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[33] F. R. S. Yorke and Marcel Breuer, "City of the Future - Architects' Point of View", in *The Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 19th, 1936, BAL, YoF/2/2

[34] The building was demolished soon after its erection.

terrace, a wooden pergola and slim interior plywood walls. A sense of contrast pervades the building: the opposition of rough and smooth, open and enclosed, warm and cool, light and dark, straight and curved, heavy and light, traditional and modern. The stone walls, which consistently appear as independent, free-standing, at best abutting units, are arranged dynamically, at times curved, placed at slightly odd angles or projecting from under the roof. The apparent rationalism and regularity of Breuer's previous architectural projects seems to have given way to a new aesthetic of controlled irregularity in which function is partially subordinated to visual effects. Thus where in the past there would have been a slim column supporting the beams of the pergola, for example, there is now a structurally unnecessarily broad chunk of wall.

This new orientation towards natural aesthetics, however, was not only a result of Breuer's response to local influences - here the specifics of the English environment[35] and the agricultural setting - but also (as in the case of Gropius) the influence of the broader developments within the European modern movement. Once more, we find Breuer emulating Le Corbusier, who used natural stone in his primitivist bungalow Maison de Mandrot of 1929-32, as well as in the curved rubble wall of the Parisian Pavillon Suisse of 1930-1. He also drew inspiration from other great modernists when designing the plan of the building. The Wrightian and Miesian qualities of the plan are unmistakable; and although Breuer never completely achieved the beautiful openness of space and flowing interplay between rooms that Mies van der Rohe had created in

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[35] According to Driller (diss., p.367), Randall Evans, Yorke's and Breuer's draughtsman at the time, insisted that Breuer was inspired by Yorke's own house which was built in Cotswold stone.

buildings such as his Barcelona Pavilion or his Tugendhat House,[36] there is still a definite sense of lack of boundaries between interior and exterior spaces in the Gane Pavilion.

In terms of its spatial conception as well as use of materials the pavilion marks a watershed in Breuer's work. Needless to say, it distinguished itself sharply from the rest of the buildings erected at the Royal Show, most of which responded to the agricultural setting in a more literal way by emulating Tudor-framed farmhouses. Breuer's pavilion received much attention and was widely published at the time. This confirmed Gane's prediction, made at the opening of the exhibition:

> ...it is expected that much interest will be aroused by this thoughtfully designed building which will do much to dispel the erroneous impression that nothing but straight hard lines and boxlike construction are obtainable in the Contemporary Style...[37]

The most important aspect of the pavilion for both Breuer and his commissioners, therefore, was to demonstrate that modern architecture was not entirely a matter of white walls and cubic forms, and that it was not entirely dependent on the use of new materials. Thus Breuer wrote:

> Even the oldest building material has changed and obtained new content and form. ...the more traditional materials can be used to express modern ideas of building just as readily as the newest materials; for this reason we must not underestimate their values.[38]

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[36] The notion of a direct parallel between Mies van der Rohe and Breuer in this context is dismissed by Driller (see "Box und Mauer - der 'nicht-Miessche' Breuer", *Marcel Breuer (diss.)*, pp.61-77).
[37] From "News from Gane", quoted in Driller, *Marcel Breuer (diss.)*, p.364
[38] Marcel Breuer, "Architecture and Material", in Gabo, N. et. al. (eds.), *Circle*, p.202

This realisation, and its manifestation in architectural design, was the most significant development of Breuer's work in Britain. His furniture as well as his architecture displayed a definite move away from the *sachlich* machine-rationalism characteristic of his German designs towards a New Contextualism with organic and natural tendencies. It was the period when for the first time Breuer's "mistrust in an intellectualised approach to architecture"[39], that is his belief in the necessity of adapting to given conditions, found a confident expression in his buildings and writings. This attitude has often been ascribed to Breuer's training as a craftsman, which almost by definition prevented him from falling into the overly conceptual approaches to which many of his fellow architects, particularly Gropius, were prone. However, it is no accident that this change in Breuer's work occurred at a time when, as explained above, a general 'humanisation' of the canon of the International Style made itself felt in certain quarters of the modern movement, expressed in a growing preoccupation with nature as well as a partial shift in emphasis from the international aspect of modernism to national and regional elements. This shift, which was also taking place in Britain, has been attributed by Powers to the influence of Surrealist tendencies, and particularly the idea of collage, on architecture.[40] The Gane Pavilion could thus be seen as the expression of wider contemporary artistic as well as architectural trends. For Breuer, the exploitation of this dialectic as a design principle in Britain was the foundation of his successful career in America, where his houses, "...based on the aesthetic of the 'Gane Show house'

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[39] Peter Blake quoting Marcel Breuer, *Marcel Breuer*, p.44

[40] See Alan Powers, "'The Reconditioned Eye' - Architects and Artists in English Modernism", in *AA Files*, No.25, Summer 1993, pp.54-62. Powers actually cites the Gane Pavilion (as well as Peter Moro's house at Birdham) as an example for the idea of "complex layering and the use of a variety of different materials" (p.55) in architecture.

and the rationale of Gropius' 'Wood House', formed the basis for a revival of domestic architecture."[41]

It is important to remember that the origins of the New Regionalist tendencies in Breuer's American work lay in Europe; he had already explored the basic ideas for his early American houses before his emigration to the USA. This is not only demonstrated in Breuer's Gane Pavilion, but even more strikingly in another design on which he was working immediately before leaving Britain: a ski hotel in the Tyrolean mountains [44].[42] This small hotel anticipates almost exactly the principles which governed Breuer's early American houses; it combines heavy load-bearing walls in rough natural stone with light wooden cladding painted white. Although never executed,[43] this hotel design, and the fact that it was conceived in Breuer's London office, illustrates the fact that new design principles which are often associated with the architect's American work, in fact emerged while he was working in Britain. Breuer's new architectural language was a hybrid of the vocabulary of the International Style he learned in Germany and the new contextual elements he picked up 'en route' to America. The diversity of the projects Breuer worked on in Britain should therefore be interpreted as the expression of a development of architectural theory and style which has its origins in Germany and Switzerland, its pivot point in Britain, and finally finds its full expression in America.

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[41] Jeremy Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain, 1919-1939* (London, 1977), p.25

[42] The commission for this hotel in Ober-Gurgl had come to Breuer from Hans Falkner, a skiing instructor and close friend of several of the Bauhaus members who used to meet regularly at Ober-Gurgl to go skiing. Falkner had decided to open his own ski school and hotel and asked Breuer to design a building for him. See Driller, *Marcel Breuer: die Wohnhäuser* (1998), pp.84-86.

[43] Its erection in Austria was vetoed by local planning authorities. After the *Anschluß*, Falkner emigrated to Canada and in 1941 asked Breuer whether to adapt the original design for a new location in Quebec, where he was working as a ski instructor. Although Breuer executed the plans, the building was never erected.

## 3.a.iv. Eugen Kaufmann

Whereas all three of the German architects discussed above re-emigrated to the United States before the outbreak of war, Kaufmann, who shared their consistent commitment to modernism, remained in Britain for the rest of his life. Eugen Kaufmann, who changed his name to Eugene Kent in 1940, had practised architecture in a modernist idiom since the 1920s. He had occupied an important role in the architecture of the Weimar Republic, his international significance underlined by the fact that he was included in Hitchcock's list of „the best" émigré architects in Britain.[44] Working under Ernst May as a Housing Director at Frankfurt, Kaufmann had been directly involved in the planning, building and promoting of the Frankfurt *Siedlungen.*[45] Here, he worked especially on the housing developments at Praunheim and Westhausen [2].[46] Kaufmann regarded May's work at Frankfurt as "an interesting idea" of which he "soon became an enthusiastic protagonist",[47] committed in both word and design. Thus when the 1929 CIAM congress was held in Frankfurt, Kaufmann was entrusted with the supervision of the international exhibition *Die Wohnung*

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[44] "Later [after Lubetkin] Gropius, Mendelsohn, Breuer and Kaufmann, to mention but the best, came from Germany...", see Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Modern Architecture in England* (New York, 1937), p.30

[45] Kaufmann's German title at May's Frankfurt office, where he worked together with Grete Lihotzky, Herbert Boehm, Adolf Meyer, Ferdinand Kramer and others, was *Städtischer Baurat.* Kaufmann had been appointed as head of the department for standardisation and building advice, where one of his roles was to issue *Normenblätter*, a publication promoting standardised housing types. (See Eugene Charles Kent, *The Memoirs of Eugene Kent*, unpublished typescript, c.1978, BAL, pp.165 and 171.)

[46] See for example Christoph Mohr & Michael Müller, *Funktionalität und Moderne. Das Neue Frankfurt und seine Bauten 1925-1933* (Cologne, 1984). According to the architect's own entries in the RIBA Nomination Papers, submitted on Aug. 9th, 1941, he was responsible for the building of approximately 3000 dwellings in these two estates. (Kent RIBA Nomination Papers, Fellow, No. 3847, RIBAA.) The novel planning at Westhausen was based on a competition design for the *Siedlung* Berlin-Haselhorst by Kaufmann and Boehm, which had won second prize.

[47] Kent, *Memoirs*, p.171

*für das Existenzminimum*.[48] In the leaflet accompanying this exhibition he stressed the necessity and importance of scientifically addressing the problem of social housing:

> Which measures of planning, technology, rationalisation, land development and financing will help us, despite all restrictions, to find the way to a minimal dwelling fit for human beings? [These and other] questions are addressed in this exhibition and shall not be ignored until we have answered them in a satisfying way, until the evacuation of the slums of our cities and the re-housing of the masses into healthy, technically up-to-date, sufficient dwellings has taken place everywhere.[49]

The undertones of this excerpt also indicate the left-wing political climate which characterised the Frankfurt project and which was responsible for the exodus of May and other Frankfurt architects to Russia at the turn of the decade. After running the Frankfurt office for several months, Kaufmann eventually followed the May group to Russia in 1931, where he contracted himself as a State Consultant on Housing and Planning for two years. In 1933, when his contract expired, developments in Germany made it impossible for Kaufmann, who was Jewish, to return to his home country. The same year he emigrated to Britain.

On arrival in Britain, Kaufmann's insight into the most progressive projects on housing in Europe instantly made him a sought-after lecturer and valuable source of information for interested members of the British architectural profession. Yet, while Britain showed an interest in Kaufmann's past achievements, it could not offer him any concrete and immediate employment

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[48] The *Wohnung für das Existenzminimum* ('minimal flat' or 'minimum habitation') was a concept pioneered by the architects of the early German *Siedlungsbau*: it involved the rationalisation of dwelling space and fixtures into compact units serving all basic human requirements, thus providing functional, low-cost housing. The 1929 CIAM congress attempted to tackle the question of social housing and the *Existenzminimum* in a scientific way.

opportunities in his field of expertise, that is to say work in housing and planning. Nevertheless, although Kaufmann soon entered into private practice in partnership with the English architect Frederick Towndrow and began concentrating on work of an altogether different kind, he did not drop his interest in social housing and town planning. Instead, he continued his research into these issues and tried to adapt his knowledge and ideas to conditions in Britain. Thus he got involved with the MARS group not long after his arrival in Britain,[50] and in 1934 is listed, together with Fry and Sise, as a project co-ordinator for a study on Bethnal Green with which MARS had been commissioned.[51] This research project, which involved analysis of maps and assessment of aspects such as population density, circulation and public usage, had been initiated by the New Homes for Old Group,[52] and as such was well suited to the émigré's expertise.

The following year, Kaufmann found another opportunity to utilise his expertise in the design for a group of working class flats submitted to a competition launched by the Cement Marketing Company in 1935 and executed in collaboration with Ove Arup [45].[53] Since the problem posed in the competition

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[49] Eugen Kaufmann, "Die Wohnung für das Existenzminimum" (1929), quoted (in German) in Mohr & Müller, *Funktionalität und Moderne*, p.149

[50] Kaufmann had been personally invited to join MARS by Godfrey Samuel and other members, presumably because of his extensive experience with both social housing and CIAM. Apart from occupying an important role in the 1929 CIAM congress (see above), Kaufmann, together with Boehm, had also participated in following meetings.

[51] See John Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin. Architecture and the Tradition of Progress* (London, 1992), p.316

[52] The New Homes For Old Group, a group of housing reformers, had commissioned MARS with this study in order to display the results at the Building Trades Exhibition at Olympia in September 1934. Yet, rather than presenting concrete architectural solutions to the problem of slum clearance and rehousing, MARS had chosen instead to do a theoretical analysis of the problem. See Louise Campbell, "The MARS Group 33-39", in *The RIBA Transactions 8, 84/85*, Vol.4, No.2, p.70.

[53] See *Working Class Residential Flats in Reinforced Concrete. Report on a Competition for the Design of 5-storey Flats*, Franck papers, BAL. Kaufmann's design was commended, but it was

brief was fundamentally the same as it had been at Frankfurt, that is to provide low-cost housing with facilities for a maximum of low-income tenants on a minimum area, Kaufmann used solutions similar to those he had tested while working on the planning and design of the *Siedlungen* Praunheim and Westhausen in Frankfurt [2]. The competition scheme, providing a total of 189 flats, consisted of seven 5-storey blocks of flats arranged in three parallel lines, slightly staggered and facing south to achieve ideal light conditions, plus one block facing west. As at Frankfurt, where particular emphasis was placed on the preservation of a countryside character, there is plenty of green space between the blocks, including allotment gardens and a playing field. The orientation and spacing of the blocks according to the achievement of ideal conditions for all tenants reflect the scientific approach to town planning that lay at the heart of the experiments in mass housing at Frankfurt and elsewhere in Germany. As regards the amenities provided, Kaufmann outdid other competition entries by incorporating in his scheme not only a laundry, but also a crèche and kindergarten, thus reflecting the special interest in educational architecture he had cultivated in Germany. As regards the interior lay-out, too, the architect referred back to ideas he and others had developed at Frankfurt: the large living room which had characterised the lay-out of the 'minimal flats' there once again dominates the plans, and the arrangement of larger flats into maisonettes had also been a typical feature of the German dwellings. For access to the flats Kaufmann proposed a gallery, a feature which he had rarely used in Germany, but which was then still common in Britain.[54]

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Lubetkin and Tecton who won the first prize, which underlines Tecton's prominent position as modernists in inter-war Britain (see 4.b.). However, none of the competition designs were built.

[54] It is possible that gallery access was one of the main points of criticism on Kaufmann's design in the evaluation of the entries, for Lubetkin and Tecton's winning scheme provided access by interior staircases.

It seems worth pointing out that the majority of competing architects, including the winners and other MARS members, preferred a *Zeilenbau* arrangement of parallel rows of slabs to the conventional lay-out of blocks around an inner court. By 1935 British architects had long known and admired the experiments in modern mass housing which took place on the Continent during the 1920s. Lubetkin and his partners at Tecton, for instance, admired German town planning developments sufficiently to keep a complete set of the journal *Das neue Frankfurt* on their office premises.[55] Furthermore, the MARS group had participated in the 4th CIAM congress previous year and had attempted to spread the latest international ideas on modern town planning among British architects.

Kaufmann himself also contributed to the dissemination of CIAM ideas in Britain. He had been involved with the congress since its meetings in Frankfurt and Brussels, and had kept in contact with its members after his emigration to Britain. Then in 1937, together with Korn and Breuer, he went to Paris to take part in the 5th CIAM congress. This demonstrates that being in Britain and running a private practice had not diminished his interest in town planning and housing, nor his belief in the their necessity for the control of urban growth and the creation of pleasant and healthy living space. He disseminated his views through his numerous lectures, one of which was reprinted under the title "Neighbourhood Units as New Elements of Town Planning" in the *RIBA Journal* of December 1936.[56] This article, in which Kaufmann is introduced as "Director of Research, the Housing Centre, London", discusses modern town planning

[55] Frederick Skinner, partner at Tecton, showed the journals to Louise Campbell in 1976.

principles on examples from Russia, Germany and elsewhere. These principles are then applied to British conditions, more specifically a London site, in a proposed rehousing scheme for St. Pancras [14]. In this scheme, Kaufmann shows how strongly he himself has been influenced by CIAM dogmas: rigorously linear arrangements of slabs and high-density three-armed point blocks sit stiffly and uncompromisingly in midst of the surrounding urban sprawl.[57] In the design, Kaufmann did not exploit any of the curves which the contours of the site provided, as it had so commonly been done in the Frankfurt schemes. All picturesque elements of planning and thus any proximity to English garden city ideas, which had characterised the 1920s *Siedlungen*, have disappeared and been replaced with a formalism so rigorous that it was bound to meet with scepticism in Britain. British scepticism about schemes of this sort did not evaporate until after the war (see 4.b.); meanwhile Kaufmann's scheme, like other émigrés' proposals of this kind (see 2.b.), were regarded with polite interest and kept safely in the drawer.

Thus Kaufmann, like many of his fellow émigré architects, had to look beyond his past area of specialism in order to find a regular source of income. Surprisingly, Kaufmann rather effortlessly slid into a niche which gave him the chance to both keep practising in a modernist idiom and secure financial stability: modern shop design. The first commission for a modern shop had come in 1934 from Rothman, the tobacco firm, with one of whose directors

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[56] Eugen C. Kaufmann, "Neighbourhood Units as New Elements of Town Planning", in *RIBA Journal*, December 19th,1936, p.165. Reprint of lecture delivered July 9th, 1936 at Liverpool School of Architecture.

[57] Interestingly, this apparently enthusiastic espousal of high-rise blocks and high-density dwelling is at odds with the attitude Kaufmann displayed several years earlier. In 1930, Kaufmann, together with Herbert Boehm, had submitted a paper to the second CIAM congress, in which he finds few favourable words for high-rise buildings. It is possible that Kaufmann did

Kaufmann struck up a friendship. This started commissions rolling like a "snowball":[58] soon he picked up new client firms, for which he executed shop fronts and interiors all over Britain, and for several of these firms he was still designing shops in the 1950s.[59]

Kaufmann's architectural practice in Britain did, however, not only consist of shop designs, but also numerous private houses and some educational buildings. His first house in Britain was a residence at Wimbledon, designed in 1934-35 in collaboration with the young British architect Elisabeth Benjamin [47a,b]. (For a discussion of collaborative aspects see 4.b.) This house has been described by Pevsner briefly and concisely as "a typical, good modern house of its date".[60] The compact and well-proportioned house in rendered brick, now demolished, featured a favourite modernist element, a rounded corner of the kind Gropius had used at his Levy house in Chelsea, and Wells Coates had used as the main design feature in his 'Sunspan' houses (the first of which was exhibited in 1934 at Olympia). In the Wimbledon house, Coates' idea of catching light and warmth by means of a large curved corner window facing south is used in the catching feature of a 'greenhouse-veranda' on the ground floor, an area of two glass surfaces running along two complete sides of the living room facing the garden [47a].[61] Along the curve, the space between the glass panes is used as a greenhouse and filled with plants, while the straight

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not simply change his mind on the issue, but that he saw the proposed scheme for St. Pancras as the only possible solution to the London problem.

[58] Kent, *Memoirs*, p.224

[59] For Fuller's, for instance, he modernised a tea room in Glasgow, Buchanan Street, in 1956 (*Building Industry*, April 1956, p.53) and for Moss Bros. he executed a shop in Liverpool, Lord Street, in 1950 (*Architects' Journal*, June 22nd, 1950).

[60] Nikolaus Pevsner & Bridget Cherry, *The Buildings of England: Surrey* (London, 1991, orig. 1951), p.526

[61] The greenhouse feature can however also be found in several modernist houses in Germany of the 1920s, for instance in Adolf Rading's Haus Haeffuer in Berlin Pichelsdorf of 1928.

side opens up to form a veranda. Thus the whole element has the effect of obscuring perceptions of interior and exterior architectural space. (This was a characteristically prominent feature in all of Benjamin's houses, especially visible in her 'St. George and Dragon House' at Gerrards Cross of 1935-36.) The roof of the glass unit forms the base of the balcony above, which, with three bedroom doors leading onto it, provides yet more outdoor living space and fulfils the modernist architect's demand for a maximum of light and fresh air for inhabitants. This feature of a fully glazed corner terrace with surmounting balcony was to re-appear in similar form the following year in Kaufmann's design for a house for F. B. Stennett at Deal. It should be stressed again at this point that British architecture at the time displayed disinterest in outdoor living; balconies and terraces are infrequently provided in standard domestic architecture. Thus when modernists began advocating sunlight and fresh air, the architectural implications of such ideas may have seemed more revolutionary in Britain than elsewhere.

The preoccupation with aspects of health and hygiene, which had been a key feature of the scientific investigations on which the first modern mass-housing experiments in Germany were based, is also evident in other works of this period by Kaufmann, including a group of four seaside houses and bungalows at Angmering-on-Sea of 1936-37 [48]. Here, too, the design of the houses provides for an inclusion of the outdoors in everyday living patterns: maximum window areas on the south side, sliding-folding living room doors and first floor bedrooms leading onto a large balcony area, directly connected to a ground floor terrace by a reinforced concrete spiral staircase, are meant to ensure the

inhabitants' maximum enjoyment of healthy seaside climate and air. A similar interest in open-air facilities can be found in Kaufmann's educational buildings.

Kaufmann's interest in architecture for education had crystallised in Germany. While working at Frankfurt, he had become interested in progressive pedagogy and had developed the idea of a more flexible approach to school architecture. This is visible in his 1930-31 design for an open-air school at the *Siedlung* Praunheim,[62] or in his pavilion with fan-shaped gardens of the same years (intended as a site for hands-on teaching of natural science) in Brentanopark in Frankfurt.[63] Around 1927 the architect had begun collaborating with the German pedagogue Kade on the topic of progressive education and architecture, a collaboration which resulted in the joint publication of *Die Neue Dorfschule* (The New Village School) in 1930. In response to the book, Kaufmann received the commission for a village school in Wörsdorf in the Taunus [49]. This school, built in 1930-31 in collaboration with Roland Naumann, was to remain not only Kaufmann's most significant work in Germany outside Frankfurt, but also "the first attempt to realise the ideals of the new pedagogy in a village school".[64] Stylistically, it was close to Kaufmann's previous work: flat-roofed cubes in characteristically additive arrangement, white render combined with facing brick details, windows of varying sizes and shapes arranged apparently at random. The most innovative aspects at Wörsdorf, however, can be found in the plan. Here, as it was described at the time, "reformed classroom practice has resulted in a complete transformation of the organisation of the rooms".[65] Rigid division

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[62] See Mohr & Müller, *Funktionalität und Moderne*, p.298
[63] See Bernd Kalusche & Wolf-Christian Setzepfandt, *Architekturführer Frankfurt am Main* (Berlin, 1992), p.124
[64] "Schule in Wörsdorf im Taunus", in *Wasmuth's Monatshefte*, 1932, p.1
[65] ibid.

into uniform lines of classrooms has been replaced with an open plan of flexible spaces for group work. Sliding doors between rooms allow for easy merging or separating of teaching space, and each room has a door leading outside onto terraces, where some of the classes, such as art and craft, were to take place. The architects' preoccupation with health and out-door activity is further illustrated in the southerly orientation of the classrooms and their large windows, in the provision of a basement swimming pool room with southern sliding-folding doors, as well as in the large areas of outdoor playgrounds, gardens and fields attached to the school.

Many of the programmatic ideas and stylistic features found at Wörsdorf re-appeared a few years later in Kaufmann's design for a Junior Block at King Alfred School in Hampstead, London [50a,b]. During the 1930s, a new relationship between school architecture and modern architecture was evolving in Britain as part of a general educational reform which was taking place at the time. This, towards the end of the decade, had culminated in the widespread encouragement of the use of modernist forms of architecture for new school buildings.[66] As is illustrated in the examples of Lescaze (for the Elmhirsts) at Dartington or Gropius (for Morris) at Impington (see 3.a.ii.), the match between open-minded pedagogy and up-to-date architectural forms often brought the commissions which modernist architects in Britain were longing for. At Hampstead, King Alfred School's history of progressive education was not only responsible for an initial mutual attraction between the school and Kaufmann,

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[66] This is illustrated for instance by the fact that by 1938 a Consultative Committee of the Board of School Inspectors "commended experiments 'in the use of open air classwork and activity' and urged local authorities to incorporate 'the best modern design when planning primary school buildings'." (Quoted in Ron Brooks, *King Alfred School and the Progressive Movement,*

but its progressive pedagogic approach also made the commission more interesting and challenging for the architect.[67]

Early in 1934, the school had formed a committee concerned with the erection of several new buildings on the grounds. A general re-planning scheme, which included several sets of new classrooms, a 'Squirrel Hall', a new arts block and an open air theatre, was drawn up by Kaufmann.[68] That Kaufmann was very keen to secure a commission at King Alfred School is demonstrated by the fact that he undertook the initial survey free of charge.[69] The same year a semi-permanent biology laboratory was erected according to designs by W. Harbrow. Although this was a simple structure, its modern design, streamlined, flat-roofed and extensively glazed "like a tram with rounded ends",[70] set the tone for what was intended to follow according to Kaufmann's scheme. The next project tackled was the Junior Block, also called the Lower School. Kaufmann had been commissioned with the first detailed drawings of this in 1934, but it took another three years until completion. Interestingly, in the initial stages Kaufmann provided plans and figures in a choice of construction materials - brick, steel or reinforced concrete - all of which he calculated would cost roughly the same. This scientific and rational approach betrays the architect's training and work with May at Frankfurt, where such calculations were used as a matter of principle in establishing the most cost-effective building method. The structure finally chosen at Hampstead was brick with reinforced concrete lintels.

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*1898-1998* (London, 1998), p.149.) An interest in the exploration of new architectural forms for educational buildings is also demonstrated in the *News Chronicle* School Competition of 1937.

[67] For a history of King Alfred School and its educational philosophy see Brooks, *King Alfred School*

[68] See lay-out plan in *The Architectural Review*, January 1937, p. 11

[69] Brooks, *King Alfred School*, p.132

[70] ibid.

The actual design, however, was largely determined by the modern pedagogic approaches taken by King Alfred School. The Junior School at Hampstead consists of four classrooms, arranged in two symmetric wings in boomerang-shape, tucked into the corner of a sports field opposite the main school buildings [50b]. The two wings are connected in the centre by an open covered court for assembly and "wet play days", which had been specified by the school's council in order to turn the Junior School into a self-contained unit.[71] The classrooms frame a south-facing triangular forecourt onto which teaching could be transferred by opening up the obligatory folding glass doors. When the Junior wing was illustrated in the *Architectural Review* in January 1937, this facility was highlighted as an essential element of the design:

> The factor of first importance however for the lay-out of the new classrooms was the character of the school as an open-air day school, each classroom of which was to have a direct communication with the adjoining open space, in order to allow an easy change-over from the classroom to the open, not only for recreation but for the actual teaching as well.[72]

This was quaintly illustrated with a picture of pupils and teachers engaged in various educational activities in front of, rather than in, their classrooms. The "chief consideration... that all classrooms should face as near south as possible, in order to catch the maximum amount of sunshine"[73] ensured a healthy and bright atmosphere for the children even when inside. In all these respects, the Hampstead design represents a successful fusion of modernist architecture with progressive pedagogy.

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[71] ibid., p.133
[72] "Three London Schools", in *Architectural Review*, January 1937, pp.10-11
[73] ibid.

By about 1937, a successful private practice had provided Kaufmann with a solid enough financial basis to build his own house in Britain. As a location he chose Welwyn Garden City. This choice is significant, for it demonstrates once more the affiliation German modernists felt with certain strands of British architectural tradition. In the case of Kaufmann, several links demonstrate his early contact with and admiration for the idea of the garden city. At an early age the young Eugen was influenced by the anglophile tendencies prevailing in his family.[74] As a young man, he followed the developments of British architecture by reading the English journal *The Studio* to which his father, a designer, subscribed. Father and son shared a fascination for British art and architecture, and when Kaufmann, during his University years, discovered the writings of Ebenezer Howard, he was "more impressed by reading *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* than by any of the lectures [he] had to attend".[75] He briefly worked for Muthesius (in whose office he is likely to have come in close contact with the English Arts and Crafts style), and visited the garden city of Hellerau, where he was impressed by the work of Tessenow. In 1922, he took a post in the Magdeburg town planning department, whose head at the time was Bruno Taut, and during his employment there he lived in the garden suburb 'Reform'. Simultaneously, from around 1920 onwards, Kaufmann had begun to show an interest in the new developments in architecture on the Continent. When he started working for May at Frankfurt in 1925, he suddenly had the chance to fuse his interests in *Neues Bauen* with his love for garden cities. He regarded May's work at Frankfurt as a direct continuation of "an idea first suggested by

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[74] In 1904, the whole family emigrated to London for a year, where Kaufmann's uncle had settled already in the 1880s. In 1914, Eugen's sister got married and settled in London, where he visited her. Kaufmann thus learned fluent English at an early age.
[75] Kent, *Memoirs*, p.37

Ebenezer Howard in England."[76] A visit to Britain in 1927 finally took him to Letchworth, Welwyn and Hampstead Garden Suburb, and it was during this stay that he met Sir Raymond Unwin, with whom May had worked in the previous decade. However, Kaufmann was struck by the divergence between what he saw in Britain and the experiments at Frankfurt: although he regarded the lay-out of the garden cities and suburbs as "pleasant enough and certainly an advance" compared with the ordinary London suburb,[77] stylistically he found the buildings "dated" and, due to their lack of interest in modern tendencies from the Continent, "not really a twentieth century creation."[78]

Yet, despite such reservations, after his emigration Kaufmann was convinced by new contacts in Britain that "there was definitely some interest ... in a contemporary renewal of forms of life,..."[79] It was that which encouraged him to move to Welwyn Garden City, and to build a house there in his own style. Metaphorically speaking, by inserting his German-grown modernist architecture into the picturesque lay-out of the garden city, Kaufmann went back to the roots of the architectural concepts he had been advocating at Frankfurt. The German architect thus retrospectively confirmed his long-standing admiration for the English garden city.[80] In the design for his house at Welwyn, which was completed in 1938 [51a,b], he merged this passion for English traditions with a belief in modernity and thus shares the tendencies which have been discussed under the heading of New Contextualism. While essentially a modernist

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[76] ibid., p.170
[77] ibid., p.188
[78] ibid., p.227
[79] ibid., p.228
[80] However, Kaufmann was not the only architect at the time for whom the historic significance and pleasant green surroundings of Welwyn Garden City held attraction: Albrecht Proskauer, another German emigrant, had built several houses here, including his own, and many British

creation, Kaufmann's design nevertheless responds strongly to its immediate environment. Several of its features, such as chimney or bay window, can be interpreted as borrowings from traditions of British domestic architecture. The greatest concession to British building traditions, however, and the most obvious deviation from Kaufmann's previous oeuvre, occurs in the choice of materials: warm-coloured facing brick has replaced smooth white render. The cubic, flat-roofed bulk of the house's main body, two storeys in height, receives visual animation through several elements. The surface of the north-west façade is broken by a chimney articulated on the outside in a continuous brick pier rising above the roof line. An entrance porch is added on the same façade, flanked on the left by a courtyard wedged between house and garage and screened off by a brick wall. The living-room is enlarged by a projecting bay-window facing south-west. On the southern corner a cut-out corner window on the first floor surmounts a cut-out terrace[81] on the ground floor, both featuring a slim white column as a corner support. The east corner is emphasised through a projecting unit which, heightened to three storeys and crowned with a flat roof with forward-jutting cornice, creates a tower-like effect.

The most spectacular design feature of the house, however, is the way in which the architecture is made to blend in with the surrounding greenery. Thus Kaufmann let the lay-out of the house be partially determined by the given landscape: one of the large trees growing on the site "was made the central feature of the paved courtyard between house and garage"[82] [51b], and the

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architects had also chosen to live at Welwyn, including Mary Medd (nee Crawley), Paul Mauger (Kaufmann's neighbour) and the modernist Wells Coates.

[81] Similar terraces can be found in Fränkel's Stanmore houses and Freud's buildings at Frognal Close, both executed in brick. See Chapter 3.b.

[82] "House, Welwyn Garden City", in *The Architects' Journal*, Dec. 28th, 1939, p.62

crowns of several other trees merge just above the flat roof. Maximum garden space is achieved by placing the house into the far northern corner of the site, which is "triangular with the apex pointing towards open fields with woods beyond."[83] Raised flower beds on parapet walls in front of the terrace and entrance porch are an integral part of the building; they introduce a further level of plantation which contributes to the merging of architecture and nature. Kaufmann had given the outdoors an important role in previous designs, but here this aspect gains added significance through its accordance with the garden city environment. At Welwyn, the émigré architect placed more emphasis on the given context and local traditions than in any previous design. In fact, when his and the two adjoining houses were being built, Kaufmann and his immediate neighbours, the architects Mary Medd (née Crawley) and Paul Mauger, "collaborated as to general arrangement and materials."[84]

When in 1941 Mauger, then a personal friend of Kaufmann's as well as his neighbour, was asked to vouch for the German architect on his application to become an RIBA Fellow, he not only praised the convenience and "admirable" planning of his architecture, but especially underlined the fact that the German had *accustomed* well to *British architectural culture:*

> Since the onset of his [Kaufmann's] practice I have been impressed with the energy and ability with which he became familiar with British methods and with our national traditions and tendencies.[85]

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[83] ibid.
[84] Proposer's statement by Paul Mauger, in Kent RIBA Nomination Papers, Fellow, No.3847, 1941, RIBAA
[85] ibid.

In other words, Mauger regarded the question of assimilation as something of prime importance in gauging the German architect's fitness for admission into the British architectural profession. In justifying Kaufmann's admission as a Fellow by emphasising his successful adaptation to British customs, Mauger illustrates the fact that amongst the majority of British architects at the time "foreignness" was still seen as an essentially undesirable quality. His statement seems to further indicate that modification of architectural style was expected of the German architects, not least because of their status as émigrés, which to a certain degree put them at the mercy of their receiving country. Excluding the minority of British modernists who were genuinely in favour of German-style modernism finding a foothold in their country, British architects on the whole regarded architectural adaptation as virtuous as well as necessary for integration, whereas strict adherence to pre-emigration styles and methods encountered overwhelming disapproval, as has been illustrated in previous chapters. Thus only if émigré architects showed visible signs of adaptation to British architectural traditions could they count on being accepted by the British profession at large.

Kaufmann's position among the German architects in Britain is somewhat unique for the reason that he was the only one who managed to achieve a *modus vivendi* with the British context while simultaneously remaining utterly loyal to modernist principles. Of the four architects discussed above, he was the only one who did not leave Britain for the United States in the search of better opportunities. And unlike the architects discussed in the following chapter, Kaufmann, despite the difficulties arising from his position as an émigré,

succeeded in sustaining a livelihood as a practising architect without digression into traditionalist designs.

Summarising the findings of Chapter 3.a., there is little doubt that while Mendelsohn, Gropius, Breuer and Kaufmann remained loyal to the language of modernism, they were nevertheless strongly influenced by the conditions presented by their new working environment in Britain. Although they carried over much of the individual architectural language of their German work and the experience they gained before emigration into their work in Britain, they nevertheless enriched that language by embracing a New Contextualism inspired by British traditions, tastes and landscape. Thus Berthold Lubetkin's contemporary criticism that many "architects from abroad ... continue[d] their work [in the 1930s] in too unbroken a sequence"[86] and his accusation of a "lack of flexibility"[87] among the émigrés in Britain (see 2.b.) is perhaps true for isolated projects by the architects discussed above; it does not, however, apply to their British oeuvre as a whole. Conscious efforts to adapt to new conditions are consistently evident in Kaufmann's British work, and Breuer's and Gropius' later work of the period also show clear signs of revisionist and contextualising tendencies.

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[86] Berthold Lubetkin, "Modern Architecture in England" (1937 for *American Architect and Architecture*), reprinted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.94
[87] ibid.

## 3.b. *Facing Tradition*: Style and Inconsistency in the Work of Fränkel, Freud, Jaretzki and Others

As we have seen above, even the most dogmatic modernists were prepared on occasion to make certain concessions to British architectural culture and the new working conditions in Britain. However, it has also been shown that strict adherence to modernism frequently brought with it a number of difficulties as regards finding commissions and thus securing a steady income (see 2.b.). Many émigré architects in Britain, mostly those of lesser international standing, showed less readiness to battle with these difficulties simply in order to maintain an adherence to architectural modernism. Caught in the dichotomy between their ideas and the realities of the British situation, they frequently opted for a pragmatic adaptation to the realities rather than an insistence on past principles which might drive them into financial ruin. Given that many German émigrés had found their way to modernism before emigration, their adaptation to British culture usually involved a partial or complete retreat from modernism and the adoption of more traditional forms of British architectural language: while grabbing a modern commission wherever possible, they also executed designs in traditionalist style where necessary. Alternatively, adjustment to Britain could involve the adaptation of essentially modernist forms to established mainstream tastes in Britain, thus developing a new Moderate Modern style 'from within' British conditions.

Through a number of case studies, the following chapter will therefore illustrate the range and variety of design responses to the émigré situation. In doing so, it

will demonstrate that the story of architectural migration is not exclusively a story of modernism, but one in which tradition plays a very important part. In concentrating on aspects of traditionalism and departure from the modernist canon, the following discussion will not only offer a more rounded picture of the story of architectural emigration, but will illuminate an aspect of the story which the existing literature has not discussed. It will give a platform to a number of architects whose British work has previously been completely or partially ignored on the basis of its less than modernist character, and will thus balance the experience of the well-known and frequently discussed architects against that of less well-established (but equally interesting) figures.

It should be kept in mind throughout the discussion that, although most had experimented with modernist forms in Germany, not all émigré architects were dedicated modernists. Many of those who employed a more eclectic stylistic line in Britain had already done so in their German work. What will emerge clearly from the chapter as a whole is that for those without international reputations, sheer economic necessities were often far more important than architectural-stylistic considerations. Their work resembles a tightrope walk between adaptation and reluctance to change, between their own ideas and the preferences of clients, between idealism and socio-economic realities.

## 3.b.i. Rudolf Fränkel

Rudolf Fränkel (later Frankel), born in 1901, had established himself as an independent architect in Berlin in 1924 and had built up a very successful and busy practice which earned him a considerable reputation in Germany and beyond. His work frequently appeared in various German and other European publications. (Fränkel's practice was commercially so successful[1] that he once rejected an invitation from Gropius to join the Bauhaus as Professor of Design in order to continue working independently.[2]) His work in Germany consisted mainly of large scale housing schemes, entertainment buildings and private residences. From the beginning, his architectural language was marked by restrained and sober forms, which towards the end of the 1920s developed into the more consistently modernist forms of *Neues Bauen*. This development can be illustrated for instance by comparing Fränkel's housing scheme at the Gesundbrunnen station of 1928 [52] with the blocks of flats at Schöneberg park of 1932 [53].[3] The stylistic language of the former, featuring pitched roofs with dormer windows reminiscent of Bruno Taut's earlier work,[4] points to the facts that Fränkel had been a pupil of Riemerschmid's[5] and a member of the German Werkbund since 1926. By contrast, in the Schöneberg scheme pitched roofs

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[1] Fränkel's commercial success may partially have been due to the fact that his father Louis Fränkel, a building contractor, arranged commissions for him.
[2] Fränkel and Gropius had known each other since the days when the latter, at the age of 18 or 19, was working as a draftsman in a Berlin construction firm owned by Rudolf Fränkel's father. I owe this and further information on Fränkel to Noel Hill, architect in London. Hill, originally a pupil of Fränkel's at Miami University, was a long standing friend of the architect and his wife, with both of whom he kept in contact until their death. I wish to thank Mr. Hill for granting me access to a large quantity of material in his possession.
[3] For Gesundbrunnen see "Neue Arbeiten von Rudolf Fränkel, Berlin", in *Moderne Bauformen*, VII, 1, 1928, pp.249f. For Schöneberg see for instance *Bauwelt*, Heft 22, 1932, pp.3f. For an overview of Fränkel's work in Germany, Romania and Britain see especially the catalogue of an exhibition of his work at the Ben Uri Gallery in London in 1950.
[4] Such as at *Siedlung* Falkenberg of 1911-14.
[5] According to Hill, Fränkel had been Riemerschmid's "prize student".

have given way to flat roofs, dark-rendered wall surfaces have become white, and small square windows are now linked with each other and balconies to create more intense horizontality. Yet, while Fränkel continuously developed the architectural language of his public buildings towards an increasingly radical modernism, his private houses, despite their modernist appearance, retained a conventional character.

In 1933 Fränkel left Germany for Romania. In Bucharest, the German was received with open arms: immediately after his arrival he was given commissions for public architecture on prominent city sites. Encouraged by this and the obvious enthusiasm for modernism in Romania at the time,[6] Fränkel designed cinemas, offices, apartment blocks [55], showrooms, factories and an embassy building, all of which are accomplished essays in the International Style. His private commissions of the period, both in Germany and Romania, were also clearly inspired by the stylistic language of *Neues Bauen*, but these small-scale designs contain strong classical undertones as well as some traditionalist remnants. The *Landhaus* L. in Saarow[7] and the houses Pop or Vaida-Comsa in Bucharest[8] thus contain vital modernist features, but the distribution of windows and the general façade lay-out are more reminiscent of a traditional Berlin villa than of *Neues Bauen*, the planning is not based on a consistent 'free plan', and the interiors, also designed by the architect, are in some places more Art Deco than *sachlich*. By the mid 1930s, Fränkel had

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[6] Modernism in architecture was embraced by Romania in the 1930s, shortly after its unification. It functioned to a large degree as a symbol for the new, modern and cosmopolitan society which Romania now wanted to be seen as. For further information and illustrations of some of Fränkel's work in Bucharest see exhibition catalogue *Bucharest in the 1920s to 40s - between Avant-Garde and Modernism* (Bucharest, 1997).

[7] See *Bauwelt*, No.1, 1933, p.11

[8] See *Viviendas*, Vol.5, No.1, March 1936, pp.78-90

become an important modernist on the Romanian scene who seems rarely to have been without commissions and whose work was widely published. However, this pleasant professional situation did not last long. In 1937, when the Nazis began to infiltrate Romania, Fränkel, as a Jew, had to emigrate once more. This time he fled across the Channel to Britain.

Arriving in 1937, the scarcity of commissions in Britain undoubtedly came as a shock for Fränkel after the wealth of building activity he had supervised in Romania. As a result of this shortage, during the next 5 years the architect was forced to take on a number of commissions which under previous circumstances he would not have considered. However, by the middle of the next decade he had found a new niche in which to continue developing his modernism: industrial architecture. By 1949 he had executed at least six factories and other industrial buildings in England and Wales. Before establishing himself in this niche, Fränkel only had limited opportunity to express himself in his favoured modernist language. One of the few projects of the time which allowed him this expression were two modern houses in Stanmore of 1938-39. No.2 Halsbury Close was for the architect himself and his wife, No.1 for his sister and her husband, Max Rachwalski, an émigré industrialist who had settled in London.[9]

No.1 Halsbury Close [54] is listed by Pevsner in his *Buildings of England*, described as "a brick cube, its most progressive feature (a cut-away corner on

[9] In 1949, the Rachwalskis having left for the USA, the house at No.1 was bought by a London family which still occupies it today and has preserved it in its original integrity. I wish to thank Hugh Courts, son of this family, for providing me with this information. His father still lives at No.1 Halsbury Close. Letter to the author, Oct. 7th 1997. The other house, No.2, built by Fränkel for himself, has been altered drastically.

the garden side) screened by a garage wing."[10] Viewed in isolation, these may indeed appear to be the only note-worthy elements of the house, but in fact there is more to say. The residence is arranged on an L-shaped plan, with a single-storey wing containing boiler room, laundry and garage adjoining the main body of the house, a flat-roofed, two-storey rectangular box. Visually, this garage wing balances the proportions of the building in height, shape and plan and releases the rigidity of the main body's cube. It is placed in such a way as to divide the area facing the street into a public side, leading visitors along the approach to the main entrance porch, and a private side, shielding the garden and terrace from visitors' view. In the elevations, harmony in proportion and unity in design are achieved through close attention to detail.[11] The windows on the garden side echo the proportions and position of the cut-out covered veranda on the corner, itself supported by a single slim white column lined up with the corner edge of the storey above. Simple, thin white plaster cornices project very slightly from the edges of roofs and porches, providing subtle horizontal structure. The grey-blue of the metal window frames, set flush with the wall, is taken up in the dark blue of the bricks used for plinth, entrance steps and terrace and contrasts with the golden facing brick used elsewhere. It is in this material that we find the most obvious departure from Fränkel's previous work: for more than a decade, the architect had almost exclusively used smooth, white-rendered walls in his designs.[12] It can be assumed that the use of facing

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[10] Nikolaus Pevsner & Bridget Cherry, *Buildings of England - London 3: Northwest* (London, 1991, orig. 1951), p.293

[11] Hugh Courts, who lived at No.1 Halsbury Close for several decades, has praised the design of the house: "...the restrained, disciplined, carefully proportioned and well designed house is substantially responsible for all my tastes, not only in architecture but also in artistic matters since I grew up." (Letter to the author, Oct. 7th 1997)

[12] It is interesting to note that whereas in his German and Romanian work, Fränkel habitually used facing brick only to accentuate details such as plinths, pillars or cornices, at Stanmore he has reversed this design feature by subtly offsetting facing brick walls with smooth, white-rendered details.

brick for the Stanmore houses was an immediate and straightforward response to British building traditions and the new working environment. It is likely that the play of rendered details against brickwork, as well as the overall restraint, simplicity and careful proportioning were particularly inspired by the immediate architectural environment at Stanmore, where many buildings in neo-Georgian style had been erected during the decade, including opulent private residences, flats and public buildings such as a post-office and a town hall.

There is clear evidence that, by the time he designed the houses at Stanmore, Fränkel had spent some time studying traditional British, and especially Georgian, architecture. This evidence comes in the form of a house called 'Hillcrest' which Fränkel had built in 1938 at 89 Winnington Road in Hampstead Garden Suburb [56], a prestigious location next to Hampstead Golf Course. This red brick building with low hipped roof emulates a grand British style, fusing the restrained forms of eighteenth-century town houses with neo-classical elements. The strictly symmetrical arrangement of façade and plan suggests classical discipline, reinforced by details such as heavy moulded cornices, brick quoins and a plain brick frieze, as well as a portico with Doric columns and a balcony with classical balustrade and urns. Classical symmetry is further achieved through an axial protruding porch unit, set apart from the main volume by means of white stone cladding, and - in true Palladian spirit - the accentuation of the central wall 'bay' through a slight projection (best visible in the cornice). The small-panelled, white-framed sash windows, set against large areas of unadorned brick wall, are typically English in character. The house in Winnington Road, although at variance with the rest of Fränkel's oeuvre, is

convincing both as a design and in its relationship with its immediate surroundings.

Given the obvious importance of the neo-Georgian for Fränkel (and, as we will see, other German émigrés, too) it is necessary to briefly take a closer look at this style and its importance within British architectural developments. The neo-Georgian did not only occur with particular frequency in Hampstead Garden Suburb during the 1930s, but also played an important - though today rarely acknowledged - role in British architecture in general during the inter-war period.[13] Its popularity had begun after the First World War, when it "came to be adopted as something very close to the 'official style' for state-subsidised housing"[14] on the grounds of its cost-saving potential.[15] In the capital, for instance, the LCC adopted neo-Georgian forms for tenement housing, such as the East Dulwich Estate or the work of Adshead and Ramsey. Another reason behind the adoption of the neo-Georgian may have been that compositionally unified groups of 'standard cottages' were regarded as an appropriate way of giving architectural form to collective ideas in modern society, and an antidote to the individualising tendencies of pre-war architecture.[16]

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[13] An increasing interest in Georgian architecture during the inter-war period is illustrated in the founding of the conservationist 'Georgian Group', set up in 1937 by Robert Byron and the Earl of Rosse.

[14] Simon Pepper & Mark Swenarton, "Neo-Georgian maison-type", in *Architectural Review*, Aug. 1980, p.92. The authors use the example of the industrial village of Dormanstown, begun in 1917 by Adshead, Ramsey and Abercrombie, and point to the important role of the Liverpool school of architecture in the promotion of the neo-Georgian for social housing.

[15] Due to standardisation, mass-production of certain components, reduction of ornamentation and often use of advanced construction methods.

[16] For this see Pepper & Swenarton , "Neo-Georgian...", and Ian Bentley, "Individualism or Community?", in Paul Oliver, Ian Davis & Ian Bentley, *Dunroamin. The Suburban Semi and its Enemies* (London, 1981), pp.104ff. Yet, the collective concept of the council estates was not shared by the majority of speculative builders and their customers who distanced themselves from it by persisting with styles such as neo-Tudor for their suburban dwellings. Neo-Georgian therefore was "perhaps the *least* frequent stylistic influence in the Dunroamin estate." (Bentley, p.120)

By the 1930s neo-Georgian architecture had become fashionable outside the context of council-built estates, too.[17] It was used not only in many private commissions but also represented an important strand in public and commercial architecture.[18] Here, "neo-Georgian provided the norm", because "modern standards of servicing and new techniques of construction could be incorporated without sacrificing a traditional image which would reassure client and customer alike."[19] It provided a welcome stylistic vocabulary for British architects who wanted to give a modern appearance to their designs without, on the one hand, distancing themselves completely from national traditions, or, on the other hand, adopting the idiom of the International Style which was beginning to make an impact at the time. The diffusion of neo-Georgian into contemporary modern architecture is illustrated in the numerous architectural publications of the period.[20] The classical foundations of the Georgian vocabulary were at the same time acceptable to traditionalists and compatible with modern stylistic and structural developments. Furthermore, they were more easily adapted to a grander style in detached houses than were the vernacular forms of the Arts and Crafts movement. In Hampstead Garden Suburb, a "need for economy" and "fashion for symmetry" resulted in the virtual replacement of the picturesque Arts

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[17] A fashion for the eighteenth-century can also be traced in furniture and interior design of the inter-war period, as illustrated for example in the costly furniture sold by Waring and Gillow. See Charlotte Benton, *British Design* (Milton Keynes, 1975)

[18] It was especially popular for schools (such as at Walpole House at Stowe School in Buckinghamshire, see *Architectural Review*, June 1935, pp.255f), town halls and banks (for examples see Country Life (eds.), *Recent English Architecture, 1920-1940* (London, 1947)).

[19] C. & T. Benton, "Architecture: Contrasts of a Decade", in *Thirties - British Art and Design before the War*, exhib. cat. (London, 1983), p.55

[20] These publications often featured numerous neo-Georgian designs in the illustrations while carrying (or implying) "modern" in their title. See for instance Howard Robertson, *Modern Architectural Design* (London, 1932), F. R. Yerbury, *Small Modern English Houses* (London, 1929) or Frederick Chatterton, *Small Houses and Bungalows* (London, 1932). The architecture of Robertson and his partner Easton, an eclectic agglomeration along "traditionalist modern" lines, also illustrates this point; their Royal Horticultural Hall, for example, while boldly

and Crafts style favoured by Parker and Unwin with the essentially anti-picturesque neo-Georgian.[21] Architects enthused by Wren, Soane, Nash and other classicists[22] now dominated many parts of the Suburb. The fashion for Georgian architecture, which probably began with the employment of Lutyens in the Suburb in 1906, can be traced in public buildings, such as the Institute of Queen Mary Hall of 1930 and Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust Office in Finchley Road of 1935, and in its inter-war residential developments.

Rudolf Fränkel himself cannot have failed to notice the architecture of the Suburb before he designed his house in Winnington Road, the features of which reveal familiarity with the wider as well as immediate environment of the residence. Thus the grand classical style he employed at 'Hillcrest' not only enjoyed sporadic popularity within the Suburb, but virtually the whole of Winnington Road is lined with residences in this style, including the houses on either side of Fränkel's house. It is significant that the first building of an established modernist architect on arrival in Britain should be a traditionalist residence in classical, vaguely neo-Georgian style. There are several reasons for Fränkel's retreat into historic forms of architecture. One of them lies in the architect's position as an émigré in the 1930s, unable to turn down commissions due to pressing financial needs. Another reason, one can assume, lay in the client's specification for the house; it is likely that the client for a house in Hampstead Garden Suburb would specifically have wanted a grand traditionalist residence in keeping with the neighbourhood. However, at least a small part of

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displaying its advanced reinforced concrete structure in the interior, is clothed in an outer garment of brick, a stylistic hybrid between Art Deco and neo-Georgian. See also 2.a.

[21] Mervyn Miller & Stuart A. Gray, *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (Chichester, 1992), p.170

[22] Such as C. H. James, who built a total of 500 houses in the style of Wren in his career, 40 in Hampstead Garden Suburb alone.

Fränkel must have been attracted to the commission. For not only was he an admirer of the ideas of the English Garden City Movement, but he is also likely to have shared the passion for British Georgian architecture which was widespread amongst German architects, including modernists. Particularly current among modernists was the belief in a connection between Georgian architecture and twentieth-century modernism. For this reason it is necessary to examine the affinity between the two styles more closely.

As has been pointed out above, there exists a certain degree of visual similarity between the Georgian and modernist vocabularies, based on the pursuit of rational, restrained, well-proportioned elevations and plans in both. Deeper affinities can also be found between the concerns and ideas of advocates of neo-Georgian architecture in the inter-war period in Britain and those of their European colleagues active in the modern movement, and the language they used to promote them. Above all, both movements came about as a reaction against turn-of-the-century architecture, in rejection of the eclecticism of the Domestic Revival and other late Victorian developments, as well as of the individualising irregularities of Arts and Crafts vernacular-derived architecture.[23] Furthermore, when architects like those of the Liverpool School called for industrialised mass-production based on standardisation, their demands were identical to those made by Behrens and the German Werkbund in the 1910s, or of modernist designers of the following decade. Supporters of both neo-Georgian and modernist design believed that an adherence to rational principles

[23] This rejection of the irrational is perhaps best expressed in town planning: neo-Georgian and modernist planners both opposed picturesque informality with academic formality. Compare for instance the layout of Unwin's Letchworth garden city of 1903 with the symmetrical classicism of the Dormanstown plans of 1917 and the regular geometry of any of May's Frankfurt *Siedlungen* (such as Hellerhof or Goldstein).

would result in cost reduction and facilitate the provision of economical mass-housing.[24] The neo-Georgians' emphasis on unity and the collective over and above individual expression also corresponded with the politics underlying the efforts of continental modernists. However, while on the Continent these progressive ideas had been bound up in the development of a modern stylistic vocabulary, in Britain they took a more traditional form. Hence, despite their common ideological ground and some basic visual affinities, the language of neo-Georgian architecture and that of the International Style rest on diametrically opposed principles: the unquestioning use of traditional forms of architecture on the one hand and their strict rejection on the other.

Nevertheless, German émigré architects continued to admire the sober elegance and standardised regularity of Georgian architecture, and to draw parallels between this and the modernist forms of architecture they had brought with them from the continent. The affinity between the two styles also seems underlined by the fact that many British architects who became modernists after the Continental example in the 1930s had started their careers by designing in the neo-Georgian style, for which Maxwell Fry serves as the best example.[25] As regards the émigrés, research seems to indicate that the perceived affinity between Georgian and modernist architecture rendered it acceptable for foreign modernists to make reference to eighteenth-century British building traditions or to execute buildings in neo-Georgian manner. One could speculate that building

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[24] This was an important argument in the period after the First World War, which was marked by extreme housing shortage, and one that was stressed by numerous design manuals in Britain at the time, such as the Tudor Walters Report of 1918.

[25] Fry's conversion from neo-Georgian to modernism happened at the beginning of the 1930s, as can be seen by comparing for instance his 'Ridge End' in Virginia Water, Surrey of 1930 with his 'Sun House' in Hampstead of 1936. In 1932 Fry, a Reilly student, was still happy for his neo-Georgian work to be published in *The Book of the Liverpool School of Architecture*, while in the following year he designed Sassoon House, a modernist block of flats in London.

in a manner derived from Georgian architecture, or simply in the classical tradition, weighed less heavily on the émigrés' architectural conscience than building, say, in a neo-Gothic mode would have. This is further supported by the fascinating fact that virtually all émigré architects who reverted to traditionalism in Britain sought inspiration in the Georgian period.

Yet while many architects, such as Hans Jaretzki, whose work will be discussed shortly, reverted to tradition without apparent embarrassment, Fränkel was never happy about building a strictly traditionalist house. In fact, he felt so strongly about the discrepancy between tradition and modernism that he buried the existence of 'Hillcrest' in silence.[26] (The same is true for a number of other designs he executed during this period.[27]) The Hampstead house has never appeared in any exhibitions or reviews of Fränkel's work, and No.1 Halsbury Close is always cited as the only example of domestic architecture of his British period.[28] This desire on Fränkel's part to suppress the existence of a traditionalist piece of architecture in his work is suggestive. It demonstrates the modernist's concern to paint his career as a picture of integrity, of perfect coherence in style and development. The architect made clear concessions to the new British environment which resulted in stylistic inconsistencies in his work, but he tried to eradicate them by stressing the element of continuity in his work. The clear embarrassment Fränkel has displayed in the past about the

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[26] Fränkel would never talk about the house in Winnington Road, and he would not even give details about it to close friends. When asked about it by Hill once in a telephone conversation, he laughed and confessed that he had never thought much of the house: "It didn't look so good to me!" (Recorded telephone conversation Rudolf Fränkel - Noel Hill, 1973. Tape in possession of N. Hill.)

[27] Fränkel built a house on Stanmore Hill, Stanmore, which, as desired by its actress-client Merle Oberon, was designed in 'Hollywood Style' with a green tiled roof, and a traditionalist residence in Pynnacles Close, also in Stanmore. The existence of both these residences, as well as 'Hillcrest', has not previously been documented.

house in Winnington Road suggests that, at the time, he compromised stylistic integrity for economic reasons and took on a commission which, under different circumstances, he would never have accepted at this stage in his career. It is also likely that only by building in a style in which, however historicist, he saw some affinity to his modernist style, he could justify this action to himself.

The problem of self-justification did not arise with the industrial buildings Fränkel began to build during war-time: they were all executed in a functionalist modernism. The first was a 1939 office and showroom building at Edgware Road in London for E.H. Jones Machine Tools [57]. Here, the émigré returns to using reinforced concrete construction, thus creating once more the smooth white surfaces and rectangular forms that had characterised his Romanian and much of his German work. Several elements in the London building provide a link with the architect's previous work and are typical of his style: the flat roof projects forward beyond the supporting wall so as to create a strongly planar impression, and facing brick is used to accentuate base and pillars and to form a visual contrast to the smooth white concrete. In the Jones building, sophistication of construction resulted in freedom of design. This is demonstrated in the main entrance façade on Edgware Road, the almost classical symmetry of which seems curiously to echo the main elevation at 'Hillcrest' [56]. At first floor level, above a central row of gates on the ground floor, flanked on either side by a short strip window, is an striking continuous strip window running almost the entire width of the façade. Surmounted by the company's name in large letters, it provides light for an internal gallery. Like a miniature curtain wall this window, projecting slightly forward from the surface of

[28] Fränkel also built another house in modernist style during the period, a simple, cubic design

the wall, is uninterrupted by structural members and thus emphasises both the horizontality of the building and the freedom of the façade.

This sophisticated handling of modern construction methods was to characterise all of Fränkel's industrial buildings in Britain. Industrial architecture provided the émigré with a new challenge, and he seems to have gained pleasure from finding the ideal structural solution to each new problem posed. Thus he designed a "minimum steel"[29] barrel-vault roof construction in a wavy silhouette with skylights and continuous overhead strip windows for a clothing factory in Congleton of 1948, and at a machine tool service station in Birmingham he used a steel frame, fully glazed on two sides to give maximum light to the double-height engineering hall inside. In his industrial work, Fränkel freely, effortlessly and competently combined various construction techniques, including steel frame, reinforced concrete, load-bearing brick. This, one might say, is the hallmark of the émigré architect: it shows that Fränkel must have received a solid grounding in building construction during his years at Berlin *TH*, a knowledge which was probably nurtured further by his father, head of a Berlin construction firm and pioneer of reinforced concrete, and naturally extended during his many years of architectural practice. Such extended structural knowledge was relatively uncommon amongst British architects at the time.

While Fränkel seems to have had problems making himself noted during his first years in England, by 1950 he had achieved enough attention to be given a one-

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in brick in Chestnut Drive in Stanmore [58]. This, too, has never received mention.

[29] "...,this barrel-vault-skylighted plant was designed to use minimum steel." Rudolph Fränkel, "Architecture for Industry" in *Progressive Architecture*, No. 4, April 1951, p.85. Using only a minimum of steel probably was a direct response to post-war shortages in the supply of certain building materials.

man exhibition at the Ben Uri Gallery in London, which resulted in invitations for teaching posts in architecture from several universities. He finally accepted an offer from Miami University and in September 1950 left England for the States. At Miami, he was to direct the first Graduate Programme in City Design from 1954. As former students testify, and as can be seen in his writings and city designs of the time, Fränkel was very much influenced by planning principles of the English Garden City movement. He was known, for instance, to have been fond of Ebenezer Howard's writings, which he included in reading lists for his students. Fränkel's involvement with garden city principles went back further, however, than his time in England. He had first come in close contact with Arts and Crafts ideas when he studied under Richard Riemerschmid 1922-24.[30] It is likely that Riemerschmid influenced Fränkel's ideas through his teaching, his own work and the introduction to the writings of Howard and Camillo Sitte, both of whom Fränkel admired all his life. Fränkel's positive attitude to the garden city idea is also illustrated by the fact that he built some houses for the Garden City of Frohnau in Berlin in 1927-28. Thus on his way to modernism he, like many other German architects of the period, had assimilated Arts and Crafts ideas. It is interesting that when Fränkel finally moved to the States and turned his attention to planning, he returned to his formative educational experiences and re-articulated his respect for the ideas of the Garden City Movement. Thus he took the best of English town planning with him to the USA and disseminated it amongst future town planners and architects.

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[30] In 1907, Riemerschmid had been responsible for the planning of the first German Garden City at Hellerau near Dresden, and he was closely involved with the German Werkbund. See Winfried Nerdinger, *Richard Riemerschmid. Vom Jugendstil zum Werkbund* (Munich & Nuremberg, 1882)

## 3.b.ii. Ernst Freud

Interestingly, while today few people in Britain have heard of Fränkel, many more seem to be familiar with the name of Ernst Freud. This, however, is probably due as much to the fact that Fränkel stayed in Britain for a much shorter period of his life and thus executed less work here than Freud, as it is a result of the latter's famous family name and father, the Austrian psychoanalyst: Ernst Freud was born as Sigmund Freud's fourth child in Vienna. Having begun his architectural studies in Vienna in 1912, he soon left his home city for Munich, where he graduated in 1919. Subsequently, he moved to Berlin, where he remained from 1920 to 1933, building up his own practice. Working during the 1920s in Berlin, centre of avant-garde architecture, Freud was exposed to the various strands of German architectural culture, which made a much stronger impact on him than contemporary Austrian developments. In the German capital, Freud quickly became a fairly well-known architect in certain circles, but his reputation did not extend to a national level; only occasionally his work appeared in contemporary publications. His Berlin work was, with few exceptions, focused on domestic designs, and he had particular expertise in conversions and interiors. In 1933 Freud and his wife immediately decided to emigrate to England - a necessary decision considering that Freud's background as an active Zionist, modern architect and son of the founder of psychoanalysis[31] made him a prime target for the Nazis. Having bought a house

[31] Psychoanalysis was officially not tolerated under National Socialism. Sigmund Freud's writings were burned by the Nazis in Berlin as early as May 1933.

in London, Freud very quickly "decided on settling there"[32] and began to build up a private practice.

If one would have asked Freud in the 1930s to classify his own stylistic tendencies, it is likely he would have described himself as a 'modern' architect.[33] However, Freud was not a modernist in the strictest sense. Throughout his career, his work was characterised by a non-doctrinaire and somewhat tentative approach. Freud's German architecture demonstrates that while he was to a certain degree open to new ideas and trends, his lack of commitment to one stylistic line resulted in a strong sense of eclecticism. Thus while for instance his 1921 house Levy-Hofer in Berlin-Dahlem[34] with its steeply pitched roof showed some influence of the Arts and Crafts style as practised by Muthesius, his house Schimeck of the following year was characterised by a "slightly classicist air" as well as elements reminiscent of the Loos school.[35] Three years later, Freud's architecture began to show the influence of Expressionism, as can be seen in the flat roof, cubic massing and exposed brickwork patterns of his 1925 house for Dr. Lampl.[36] In the following years, Freud moved towards a stylistic language inspired by the rationalist end of the modernist spectrum, as shown in the cubic volumes and horizontal bands of metal windows of his only non-domestic design

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[32] Sigmund Freud in letter to Ernest Jones, July 23rd, 1933, quoted in A. Paskauskas (ed.), *The Complete Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and Ernest Jones, 1908-39* (London, 1993), p.725

[33] This can be deduced from statements he made in England, as for instance in a letter to the editor ("A Foreign Architect observes England") published in *Design for Today*, Vol.II, No.18, Oct. 1934, pp.394-5.

[34] Only the eastern part of what used to be a semi-detached building still exists. For illustration see Volker Welter, *Landhaus Frank*, unpublished typescript on Freud and his Villa Frank in Berlin (1992), FMA, p.67. Dr. Volker Welter was part of a team responsible for the listing of the Villa Frank in the early 1990s. I wish to thank him for sharing information and ideas on Freud, as well as other aspects of this thesis, with me.

[35] According to Welter, ibid., p.20. The Schimeck house was demolished in the 1970s.

[36] See *Die Pyramide*, No.7, 1928. The horizontal strips of projecting bricks grouped around windows Freud used here were a popular feature in German Expressionist architecture at the

in Germany, a tobacco store for a cigarette factory in Berlin of 1927.[37] A more *sachlich* vocabulary can also be detected in the architect's most acclaimed German building, a lakeside villa for Dr. Frank in Geltow near Berlin, built 1928-30 [59].[38] This three-storey, flat-roofed brick villa is a competent exercise in functional planning. On the exterior, a constant play with irregularly recessed and projecting cubic architectural volumes confidently dominates the overall design. To the south volumes are strikingly arranged to form three successive terraces or balconies facing the garden and lake. Yet, while there is a definite affiliation between the Villa Frank and the stylistic tendencies of *Neues Bauen* - the brick finish and general lay-out can be compared for instance with Mies van der Rohe's house Wolf of 1926[39] - Freud does not exploit modernist design principles to the full. His planning, for example, although thorough and functional, does not make use of the flexible layering, fusing and dividing of space that modernists were advocating at the time, but instead remains rather conventional.

What this brief overview of Freud's German work suggests is that the architect was capable of embracing a variety of contemporary architectural modes. However, rather than penetrating to the basic principles underlying them, he selectively combined their characteristic stylistic elements with more

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time and can be found in Berlin in the work of Mendelsohn, Gutkind and many others. A hipped roof was subsequently added (see Welter, p.68).

[37] See *Der Industriebau*, No.7, 1929, pp.231-3

[38] See *Ideal Home*, April 1934, p.223 and *Architect's Journal*, June 21st, 1934, pp.892f. There has previously been some confusion amongst German scholars about the authorship of the design for this villa, which has been attributed to Mies van der Rohe and Henry van de Velde respectively. However, in the light of the material in Britain, there remains no doubt that the building was designed by Freud in collaboration with Alexander Kurz. (See especially Kurz RIBA Nomin. Papers, Licentiate, No.6236, July.1947, RIBAA and Kurz biography file, BAL.)

[39] As pointed out by Carsten Liesenberg, "Auf dem Weg zur Moderne - jüdische Architekten im Brandenburgischen", in Diekmann & Schoeps (eds.), *Wegweiser durch das jüdische Brandenburg* (Berlin, 1995), p.454

conservative design ideas, thus producing an architecture best described as Moderate Modern. (This tendency can also be seen in his country house for L. Scherk [5].) In this respect Freud represents a broad and important section of German architects who, because of their lack of dogmatism and their willingness to reconcile the traditional with the new, are often ignored in the history of modernism in inter-war Germany. However, the popularity of architects like Freud suggests that there was significant demand for a moderate modernism amongst private clients in Germany at the time. Hence while Freud's flexible and eclectic approach may have prevented his entry into the ranks of acclaimed modernists, it nevertheless ensured his success on a commercial level. It is extremely interesting to see that, after emigration, Freud's German approach to design proved equally successful in Britain - his Moderate Modern style apparently suited an architectural climate which was, on the whole, not receptive towards innovation. On arrival in Britain, Freud began to observe closely national architectural traditions and contemporary trends,[40] channelling his observations into his designs while fusing, as he had done before, modern and traditional elements and embracing a variety of stylistic approaches in the process.

Another major parallel between his British and his German work lies in the nature of Freud's commissions. In Berlin, he had established himself as a specialist in domestic design, with particular emphasis on conversions, extensions and interiors. In Britain he continued in virtually the same field. While other émigrés, as explained above, needed to find new areas in which to

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[40] That Freud made observations and formed opinions about the state of British architecture soon after his arrival in the country is demonstrated for example in his letter to the editor of

concentrate their work in order to keep their heads above water financially, Freud was able to continue practising in a niche he had already occupied prior to emigration. During the first couple of years in London, when Freud was trying to find a foothold in the British profession, his expertise in conversions gave him a better chance to find commissions at a time when, due the recent slump in the British economy, people were still cautious about large private building projects. Early on in his British career, Freud had demonstrated his particular talent for conversions in his own family's house at St. John's Wood Terrace, where he had stipulated that he should be able to re-design the house according to his needs on signing the lease. Freud up-dated the building by adding an extension with a balcony and flat roof for sunbathing onto the rear and by increasing window space through large Crittall metal windows and sliding-folding doors towards the garden. He also completely re-designed the interior, rationalising space with careful planning and built-in furniture.

The publication of the conversion of Freud's house, together with an interview of the architect, in the November issue of *Decoration* in 1935 must have further reinforced his reputation in this field. In this interview, Freud confessed to the careful, flexible approach identified above in relation to his German work: "...I love the conditions stipulated by an existing building of character," he stated, "...very often old houses have great possibilities in their rooms."[41] At the same time, he distanced himself from modernist dogmatism by saying that he thought it "just a matter of tact and taste to combine old and new things"[42] and by stressing the importance of respecting a client's wishes in the execution of a

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*Design for To-day*, in which he voiced surprise at the lack of modernism in the country. See "A Foreign Architect observes England"

[41] "Ernst L. Freud, interviewed at his new London house", in *Decoration,* No.7, Nov. 1935, p.23.

commission.[43] Given the attachment felt by the majority of British people for their indigenous traditions, architectural and otherwise, an architect promising to respect traditions while simultaneously offering a modernised home is likely to have had great appeal. For instance, Freud's confession to liking fireplaces and antique furniture in the same interview probably increased his popularity substantially. His modern outlook combined with a down-to-earth attitude must have seemed attractive to many potential new clients, and it is likely that the architect's statements were calculated precisely in order to achieve that effect.

During his first few years in Britain, Freud modernised a large number of interiors, mainly in London, many of which were published in issues of *Good Housekeeping*.[44] Around 1935-6 the architect was also involved in the re-planning of a house at 11 Pilgrim's Lane in Hampstead for Dr. Marx[45] and the design of a cottage extension for Ernest Jones, friend and biographer of his father's, who expressed admiration for the architect's skills:

> Ernst is occupied at present [1935] in, amongst other things, designing a new wing for my cottage in Sussex. Although it is a small matter it is surprisingly complicated and that gives me an opportunity for the highest admiration of his extraordinary ingenuity and masterly efficiency.[46]

In addition to converting flats and houses, Freud also received some commissions for shop designs in prominent locations in London. This again

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[42] ibid.
[43] ibid.
[44] See collection of journals in Freud papers, BAL (Acc.M276). For photographs of interiors see also Freud photo collection, BAL. An obviously close contact with the Institute of Good Housekeeping subsequently led to a commission for the re-design of a large kitchen and laundry for the Institute at Grosvenor Gardens.
[45] See *Architectural Review Supplement*, No.516, November 1936, pp.221-2
[46] Ernest Jones in letter to Sigmund Freud, June 27th, 1935, quoted in Paskauskas, *The Complete Correspondence*, p.745

provides an element of continuity with his German work, which included a number of shops. In Britain he designed for instance a basement shop in Bond Street Corner,[47] and for his sister he fitted out a dress shop called 'Robell' in Baker Street.[48] As in Germany, Freud continued to improve his income by designing furniture. His furniture, like his architecture, had a contemporary and plain but sensible feel to it. As regards materials, Freud much preferred the natural: wood, fabrics and soft colours for his furniture and interiors (in the same way as he preferred exposed brick for his architecture). It is interesting to note also the consistency in Freud's interior and furniture work of the period: comparing the rooms he refurbished in Germany with those he did in Britain, many similarities can be noticed as regards materials and shapes used, the spatial distribution of furniture and the combination of new and old elements. Having established a firm reputation as an expert in conversions during the years before the outbreak of war, the architect had created himself a firm base on which to build in the years immediately after the war when there was an increased demand for such work because of war damage.[49]

Yet not all of Freud's British work consisted of conversions; he also executed larger commissions for domestic architecture. In fact, during 1933-39, Freud never seems to have been short of commissions. There are several reasons for Freud's relative success as an émigré architect in Britain. One was the flexibility he showed as regards commissions: he did not reject work on the grounds of its

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[47] See photograph collection, BAL.
[48] See *Jewish Chronicle*, Jan. 6th, 1939
[49] Amongst Freud's conversion projects between 1945 and 1950 were a conversion of houses in Littlehampton into seaside flats (see *The National House Builder and Building Digest*, November 1946, p28-9), an extension to an old cottage in Sussex, a conversion of a house in Hampstead into flats and a conversion of two garages into a dwelling at 1 Daleham Road, London (see RIBADC RAN 65/F). He also re-designed a large kitchen in an old building of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (see *Architects' Journal*, Jan. 6th, 1949, pp.11-12).

small scale. But the main secret of Freud's success were his extremely well developed social skills. Within a very short period of his arrival in Britain, he had established important contacts in various institutions of design and architecture and especially in the publishing industry.[50] The 1935 interview in *Decoration* helped to familiarise the interested public with his name - the importance of which Freud recognised and pursued strategically, aware that a good network of contacts would produce commissions. The famous family name and Sigmund Freud's contacts within the British and émigré Jewish circles brought a great advantage for the architect son,[51] who soon developed his own network of émigré clients (see 2.b.). Another reason for Freud's success as an émigré architect lay in the appeal of his Moderate Modern style of design and his flexible approach to a British clientele. His special attention to his buildings' context, for instance as regards the use of materials, demonstrates a basic respect for the built environment and national architectural traditions. In order to understand how Freud's architecture suited the British architectural climate in the inter-war period, it is necessary to have a closer look at his designs.

It was around the years 1935-36 that Freud's efforts - in conjunction with the upswing experienced by the general economy and building industry at the time - began to bear fruit in the shape of larger commissions. By that time also, a larger number of émigrés from Germany and Austria had settled in London, to whom Freud could look for commissions. Amongst the first of his major commissions were a house at 14 Neville Drive in Hampstead Garden Suburb

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[50] As is indicated by the fact his work, past and present, began to be published regularly in various British architectural journals from around 1934.

[51] Sigmund Freud, his wife and daughter Anna emigrated in 1938 from Vienna to London, where they moved into a house in 20 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, today's Freud Museum. S. Freud died the following year.

[60][52] and a music room for a house in the Surrey countryside [61], both executed before autumn 1936. The house in Hampstead Garden Suburb [60a,b] was commissioned by the émigré family of Wolfgang Herrmann, an eminent art and architectural historian from Berlin with whom the Freuds had already been friendly before emigrating.[53] In a post-war auctioneer's prospectus, 14 Neville Drive was advertised as "a modern architect designed house adjoining and overlooking Hampstead Golf Course" including "attractive gardens to the front and rear" as well as an "excellent garage."[54] The house was further described as being "constructed of an attractive chocolate-coloured, mellowed, facing brick, with ... most pleasing elevations."[55] However, what is described here as a 'pleasing' effect stems less from the modernity of the design, than from the restraint which is applied to the modern features and the subtlety with which they are combined with conventional elements. This is a hybrid design. The volume of the house is contained within a single chunky, solid brick cube with adjoining garages, topped with a heavy tiled hipped roof with a slight curve in its slope. With this combination of heavy main body and pitched or hipped roof, Freud returned to the traditional formula he had used in many of his German houses, while the roof simultaneously echoes a shape which can be found with

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[52] There is some confusion over Freud's work in Neville Drive. Whereas there is no doubt about Freud's authorship of No.14, this building is not mentioned in Stuart Gray's gazetteer of Hampstead Garden Suburb (in Miller & Gray, *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (Chichester, 1992)). Instead, however, Gray writes of "groups of four houses designed by Ernst Freud, ... at the junction with Holne Chase... of which only No.21 was built, in 1935..." (p.233) Yet, No.21 is a bluntly modernist design (seemingly a mid-1930s annexe to an already existing house) whose white-washed walls, curved corners, flat roof et al. have little in common with the sensitivity typical of Freud's work. His tentative design for No.14 suggests that he was not the architect of No.21. Much of the material in Hampstead Garden Suburb Archive has been inaccessible due to re-cataloguing, and data to support my argument have remained elusive. Nevertheless Gray's judgement should be questioned since his account of Freud's work contains several inaccuracies.

[53] I am grateful to Harry Weinberger, artist, Leamington Spa, for sharing this information with me. The Herrmanns were his parents-in-law. Harry Weinberger and his wife Barbara lived for a year with Barbara's parents at 14 Neville Drive. See 2.b.

[54] Auctioneer's prospectus (Harrods Ltd.), undated, Freud photograph collection, BAL

[55] ibid.

frequency in the surrounding buildings of Hampstead Garden Suburb. The elevations of No.14 Neville Drive are plain, almost severe. The northern façade [60b] contains two metal ribbon windows, the band on the upper floor slimmer than the one below. An interesting feature is the white canopy which forms a projecting lintel to the ground floor window band and merges with a curve into the entrance canopy, whence it is carried around the corner along the west façade. The canopy is echoed on the garden façade [60a] where it appears above a band of ground floor windows illuminating the large living room. This southern window and its canopy merge into a sheltered garden loggia to the east, reached from the living room via glazed double doors. In the interior, the spacious sitting room is divided from the dining area by a sliding door, and a double door leads to a fully fitted kitchen, all designed by the architect. The "unusual curved staircase"[56] is a trademark of Freud's interiors. The way in which Freud softly merges the architecture with the garden and the rear garden with the adjoining golf course points to an interest in landscaping he had already demonstrated in Germany, for example in the Villa Frank, where he displayed his talent for an organic blending of architecture and nature.

Although 14 Neville Drive distinguishes itself from its immediate neighbours through the severity of its elevations and simplicity of its volumes,[57] looking at it today the overall effect still is less one of a modern design than of a conventional design with modern touches. Freud's approach to the Neville Drive design may have been affected by two main factors. One was the role of the client who, as an admirer and historian of the Prussian classicist architect

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[56] ibid.

[57] This contrasts starkly with the playful shaped gables of the Dutch-colonial style of Nos.16 and 18, as well as the Art-and-Crafts derived red brick building at No.12.

Schinkel, might explicitly have preferred a simple and moderately contemporary design to a radically modernist one.[58] The other factor was the location of the house. Given Freud's characteristic interest in and respect for existing contexts, it is likely that he felt the need to achieve a design which was modern yet not offensive to the predominant architecture of Hampstead Garden Suburb. That the restraint applied to No.14 was self-imposed rather than the result of restrictions dictated by planning regulations is illustrated by a quick look around the street. Being part of the 'New Suburb', the later, less controlled and less unified development of Hampstead Garden Suburb, the houses in Neville Drive represent a variety of architectural styles, not all of which are sympathetic to the traditions established in the 'Old Suburb'.[59] Especially No.21 Neville Drive, a flat-roofed design which whole-heartedly embraces a white concrete-steel-and-glass idiom with ample curved corners, windows and balconies, demonstrates that modernism of this kind was not ruled out in the 1930s development of the Suburb.[60] Yet despite having a relatively free rein as regards design, Freud chose brick elevations and a hipped roof as features typical of houses in Hampstead Garden Suburb, especially the older part. This can be seen as evidence of the émigré's sensitivity to the character of the area. It is possible that at 14 Neville Drive Freud was proposing an alternative modernism which worked in convergence with traditional architecture rather than forming an opposition to it.

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[58] For more details on Herrmann see references in Chapter 2.b.

[59] The styles of houses in Neville Drive range from Arts-and-Crafts and neo-Georgian to Dutch Colonial and 'International Style' modernism. Gray has pointedly described the street as "resembling somewhat an Ideal Homes Exhibition, each house clamouring for attention." (Miller & Gray, *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (Chichester, 1992), p.233)

[60] Discounting the suggestion that No.12 itself could be a design by Freud (see note 51). Hampstead Garden Suburb had begun to see the sporadic erection of modernist houses, such as those by G. Brian Herbert at Vivian Way, in 1935.

Although the fusion of contemporary and traditional features was characteristic of all of Freud's work, in some of his designs the architect displayed a greater readiness to reign in his modern affiliations in favour of achieving a harmonious relationship between his designs and the existing architectural environment. This is illustrated in his design for a music room at Pine House in Surrey [61a-c]. On the exterior of this building, there is little trace of a modernist language. Instead, there is plenty of evidence of the inspiration of eighteenth-century British architecture. Freud's music room is a simple rectangular volume containing a single room with very high ceiling, connected to an existing half-timbered house by means of a passage-way. It has a hipped pantile roof of the same shape as the house in Neville Drive. The fact that the new building was to function as an extension of an existing traditionalist house determined much of its design: "The owners and architect realised that this room ... should harmonise as far as possible with the older building."[61] However, while willing to revert to a traditionalist architectural vocabulary, Freud was evidently not prepared to design an annexe in the form of a timber-framed barn. Instead, he tried to achieve a more subtle match between the old and the new. Thus the elevations of the new building correspond with the old house in terms of their symmetrical lay-out and building material, a "low-toned" facing brick, without directly imitating its design. The music room faces the house on the opposite side of the garden, its graceful façade lined with five slim windows rising the full height of the elevation. The slender proportions of these windows, which are three times as high as they are wide, are reminiscent of the elegance of Georgian elevations, an impression which is further underlined by the contrast of the white window frames against the brickwork and the reinforced horizontal

[61] "Music Room at Pine House, Churt, Surrey", in *Country Life*, Sept. 26th, 1936, p.xxxvi

glazing bar in the centre, faking the appearance of a sash window. The fact that in this design Freud gave preference to the forms of eighteenth-century British architecture rather than the playful, picturesque timber-frame of the old house or any other historical style, is significant. In doing so, the architect followed the same tendency as many other German émigré architects in Britain, as identified and explained above in the context of Fränkel's work.

In Freud's Pine House design the elegant proportions and sober forms of Georgian architecture formed an ideal basis for the symbiosis of modern and traditional elements to which the architect aspired. His attempt to relate the music room to the old house had further design implications. For example, in response to the small-paned, leaded windows of the old house, Freud used Crittall steel frames to subdivide each music room window into twelve panels. And in order to achieve a "gradual transition ... from the old to the new"[62] he designed the connecting passage-way as a blending unit between the old and the new building, imitating the small-paned windows of the old house, while furnishing it with the contemporary fittings he used in the music room [61b]. In the room itself, much of the design was determined by its function as an environment for music and social entertaining. Acoustics determined the high ceiling (and, allegedly, the pitched roof), as well as the materials for wall surfaces, namely Japanese grass cloth. It is in the interior decoration that the modern affiliation of Freud can best be recognised: surfaces are flush and neutral in colour, forms are simple and functional, and there is no applied decoration on walls, furniture or fireplace. Modern accents are provided by the striking light fittings, the wooden floor mosaic, rugs by Marion Dorn [60c]and

[62] ibid.

stained glass windows by Ernst Leyden. It is at the same time remarkable and characteristic of Freud's design approach how seamlessly these contemporary elements are fitted into the traditionalist architectural framework. While the music room at Pine House is probably the architect's most traditionalist building of the inter-war period, it also provides the best example of his ability to contextualise his designs with their immediate environment without compromising his own design ideas completely. (It is interesting to note here the difference between Freud and Fränkel, who avoided hybrid designs in favour of clear-cut stylistic distinctions.) Additionally, the Surrey design highlights once more the importance Freud placed on collaborating with his clients and responding to their wishes instead of imposing his own design ideas upon them.

However, it is with his modernist buildings that Freud made his name known in British architectural circles. Thus his group of modernist houses in Frognal Close in Hampstead of 1936-38 [64a-c] received publication in several architectural journals in Britain.[63] Nos. 1-6 Frognal Close consists of three pairs of flat-roofed semi-detached brick houses built around a short cul-de-sac road rising uphill, with two identical pairs on either side of the road and one pair facing the internal square at the end. With these houses, Freud returned to the additive arrangement of cubic volumes and *sachlich* language that had characterised his Villa Frank and house Lampl in Germany. Close similarities to the Frank design can also be found in the successful landscaping and terracing of the architecture on the sloping site, which is evident in the stepped walls and stairs marking the borders of the gardens, as well as the addition of a third storey with large roof garden on the two end houses. The elevations in Frognal

Close are in yellow-brown facing brick and kept very plain, set off by white details such as cornices, window frames and entrance canopies. Slight recesses at the abutment of two houses and horizontal bands of raised brickwork around the windows, some wrapped around a corner (reminiscent of Mendelsohn and the Expressionist brick banding at house Lampl), introduce movement into the wall surfaces. The brick bands (a substitute for real ribbon windows) and pronounced cornices also give the buildings a horizontal emphasis. The projecting flat canopies over the entrances, supported on a white corner column, are designed to give the impression of cut-away corners and thus reinforce the cubist appearance of the houses, but in reality the corner volumes of the houses are unbroken.[64] Freud's houses fit into the Moderate Modern mainstream of his work: they represent the sensible and quiet, unspectacular modernism he had developed in Germany. This is also evident in the functional and technically up-to-date, but by no means adventurous interior planning of the houses. Significantly, Freud's Frognal houses fit relatively comfortably into the Hampstead environment. This, on the one hand, results from the fact that Frognal Close forms an almost self-contained urban unit [64b], sheltered by much greenery and without close visual relation to neighbouring buildings, but it may also be put down to the brick finish and general stylistic restraint of the design.

Probably the most imposing modern design of the period by Freud was a block of flats called Belvedere Court in Lyttleton Road in Hampstead Garden Suburb [62] of 1938. In this striking design, a four-storeyed brick structure containing 56

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[63] See for instance *The Architects' Journal*, Vol. 88, Sept. 1st, 1938, pp.373-5 and *Building*, July 1938, p.269.

flats, Freud arranged three blocks along an east-west line, staggering them both in height and plan in order to follow the rise and slight bend of the road. Four semicircular units protrude southwards at right angles at the ends and joints of the blocks, their curves accentuated by continuous bands of windows. The whole southern aspect is extensively glazed, thus ensuring a "maximum of sunshine, light and air"[65] for the rooms inside. The flats themselves contain four to five rooms each and were described as "spacious and well-proportioned" "truly labour saving flats" with "special feature" fitted kitchens of "unusually light and spacious" quality.[66] The many windows of the building are arranged so as to give a horizontal emphasis to the façades. This horizontality is further stressed by white cornices of artificial stone running the entire length of all three blocks without interruption, cunningly bridging the height difference of half a storey between them by forming the window sills in one and the lintels in the adjacent block. The white colour of the cornices and the frames and surrounds of doors and windows contrasts with the darker brick finish of the elevations and adds movement to the façades.

The almost expressionist dynamism of the building, in particular the pronounced horizontality and intersecting curved units, make Freud's Belvedere Court very reminiscent of Erich Mendelsohn's designs. Yet the London design does not match the modernism of a Schocken store or Woga complex. Above all, the less than convincing design of the northern elevations indicate that Freud conceived his building from the street façade only, paying little or no attention to the rear of the building - a *faux pas* which would never have occurred in the office of

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[64] This is unlike the cut-out corners in Fränkel's houses at Stanmore, which bear a vague general resemblance to the Frognal houses.
[65] Belvedere Court prospectus, undated, Freud photograph collection, BAL

Mendelsohn. In other respects, too, Freud's design represents a somewhat weak imitation of the Mendelsohnian style. The windows are not real ribbon windows but are designed to give that appearance. And while the curved volumes have a flat roof, the top storeys of the three main blocks are contained within a dark-coloured tiled pitched roof. The steep angle of this roof is especially visible on the corner in the short end block facing west. On this west façade the horizontality of the design is interrupted and replaced by a vertical emphasis articulated in a slim vertical staircase window and single vertical windows. The entrance porches have white surrounds moulded in Art Deco fashion. Such features, as well as the restriction of height to four storeys, all diminish the modernist appearance of Belvedere Court, while at the same time very subtly rendering it more sympathetic to its Hampstead Garden Suburb environment. The appearance of the Lyttleton flats to a certain extent conforms to a style of modern blocks of flats which had, by 1938, established itself as an accepted formula in the London area and beyond. This was characterised by brick structures with flat roofs, horizontal windows, rounded corners, and mannered detailing, and can be found in buildings such as Burnet, Tait and Lorne's Mount Royal flats on Oxford Street, Guy Morgan's Cholmeley Court in North Road, Highgate or many of the flat buildings erected by the LCC at the time. Additionally, a particularly strong resemblance exists between Belvedere Court and Robert Atkinson's Stockleigh Hall at Regent's Park in London of 1936-7 [63], evident especially in the sharp curves of the protruding bays and the use of cornices to achieve a horizontal effect.

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[66] ibid.

But perhaps most remarkable about Belvedere Court is the fact that Freud was entrusted with its commission in the first place, especially regarding his total lack of experience with architecture of such scale in the past. Given its large size and prominent location, as well as the fact that it was built at a time of approaching war and growing anti-Semitic and anti-émigré feeling (see 1.b.), it demonstrates how secure a foothold the émigré architect had gained in Britain in the five years since his arrival and how reliable his network of contacts was for securing commissions. While many other émigrés found their multi-storey housing schemes rejected or ignored (see 2.b.), Freud managed to overcome these barriers. This further demonstrates that Freud's Moderate Modern style of design was regarded as suitable by English planning authorities to occupy a prominent place in an area containing the quintessence of traditionalist English domestic architecture. It is perhaps interesting to note that while working in Germany, Freud had never been entrusted with a commission of this kind.

It was his principle of diluting the vocabulary of modernism by introducing more conventional elements, as well as his readiness to adjust his designs to any given environment and requirements that made Freud's architecture popular. These tendencies can be detected in all of his works of the period[67] and lay at the heart of the architect's success, both in Germany and in Britain. In other words, Freud adjusted to the prevailing conditions, traditions and tastes in Britain, but in doing so he merely followed a principle he had already applied in Germany. Having a moderate and adaptable disposition was a particularly

[67] This also applies to another domestic design of Freud's of the period, a house called 'The Weald' in Betchworth in Surrey of 1939. In this flat-roofed, white-rendered concrete structure Freud used a protruding semicircular bay (reminiscent here of the garden façade in Mendelsohn's Church Street design), but plan and elevations are conventional (containing symmetrical lay-out and vertical windows).

suitable attribute for an émigré architect in inter-war Britain. This cannot only be seen in Freud's experiences, but, as will be shown below, also in those of Caspari, Jaretzki, Jelinek-Karl or Freud's friend F. H. Herrmann. What is shown by the case of Freud is that in order to be successful as an émigré architect in Britain it was of paramount importance to strike a stylistic note in tune with the currently accepted forms of modernism.

## 3.b.iii. Hans Jaretzki, Peter Caspari and Bernd Engel

Striking a stylistic note in tune with British tastes and traditions could, however, just as easily mean a more whole-hearted embrace of architectural traditionalism. While Fränkel and Freud only occasionally embraced full-blown traditionalism, some German émigrés turned the imitation - or re-interpretation - of past British architecture into a recipe for success. Among those was Hans Jaretzki. Born in 1890 in Berlin, Jaretzki had studied in Berlin, Munich and Dresden and had been in private practice in Beuthen, Breslau and Berlin from 1918 to 1933, when he was expelled from the BDA because he was Jewish. He came to England in November 1933, via Holland and France, and settled in London.[1] Here he started out by designing furniture and interiors for Alexander Davis in Euston Road as well as for H. K. Furniture (later Heal's). In 1935 he set up in private practice in London, working in partnership with James S. Bramwell until 1936 and then continuing on his own.

Probably the most remarkable aspect of Jaretzki's work, both in Germany and Britain, is its heterogeneous nature. In Germany, Jaretzki had worked on a large variety of building types, including factories, numerous villas and other residences in Berlin, blocks of flats [67] and offices, as well as a cinema [65]. Together with the architect Alfred Wiener, with whom he was in partnership for a few years in Berlin

[1] Much of the information about Hans Jaretzki was provided by his daughter Eve Haas, who lives in London. I am grateful to her and her son Tim for their help.

and who later emigrated to Palestine,[2] he built a number of commercial buildings and designed an (unexecuted) modernist synagogue for Berlin's Klopstockstrasse [66].[3] Although somewhat eclectic in nature, Jaretzki's pre-emigration work broadly belongs to the Moderate Modern stream of German architecture identified above in relation to Freud's work. Jaretzki's (and Wiener's) style was characterised by a general open-mindedness towards modern forms which increased markedly around the end of the 1920s.[4] This increasing move towards the vocabulary of *Neues Bauen* can be traced in Jaretzki's synagogues[5] as well as other designs the period. By 1930, he had arrived at design such as the 'Park-Lichtspiele' cinema in Berlin [65].[6] Featuring a flat façade, the concrete middle section of which rises squarely above the straight roof-line of its brick-rendered side sections, and smooth surfaces contrasting with the neighbouring pattern of protruding horizontal lines of exposed bricks, this is evidently inspired by the work of Gutkind and other Berlin modernists. Four thin parallel strips of windows above the entrance doors define the centre of the façade. The geometry Jaretzki employs in this cinema is echoed slightly later in a summer house in a beautiful wood and lakeside setting in Berlin, designed for the

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[2] See Myra Warhaftig, *Sie legten den Grundstein. Leben und Wirken deutschsprachiger jüdischer Architekten in Palästina 1918-1948* (Berlin, 1997)

[3] See *Bauwelt* 22, 1929, p.525. Krinsky (p.95) has suggested that the façade of this synagogue was inspired by Le Corbusier's 'Les Terraces'.

[4] Jaretzki's conversion to modernist design is perhaps best illustrated in the fact that around 1926-28 he sold all the antique family furniture in his belongings and "went modern" in homage to the Bauhaus. According to Eve Haas, interview with the author, Sept. 23rd, 1997.

[5] While the heavy monumentality of his early synagogues still refers to prototypes of synagogue design popular in the Wilhelmine era, in the design for Klopstockstrasse [66] all decorativeness and classical elements have been replaced by a cubist simplicity. For the history of synagogue architecture see C. H. Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe. Architecture, History, Meaning* (New York, 1985) or H. Hammer-Schenk, *Die Architektur der Synagoge von 1780 bis 1933*, exhibition catalogue (Frankfurt, 1988). Photographs of Jaretzki's drawings, including those of early synagogue designs, are in possession of Eve Haas.

[6] Photograph in possession of Eve Haas.

British Ambassador Sir Eric Phipps in Germany.[7] This flat-roofed house follows the canon of the International Style, has a well-planned, functional interior and provides for outdoor living with a terrace and sleeping porch.

Yet, Jaretzki's conversion to modernism was not consistent: at the same time as designing this house he was still using more traditional formulas where appropriate, as can be seen for instance in the pitched roofs, vertical windows and dark-rendered surfaces of his flats at Berlin Weissensee of around 1930 [67].[8] With his flexible, non-doctrinaire approach to design Jaretzki belonged to a large group of German architects which, although keen to adopt modernist forms for reasons of fashion and public demand, was not committed to modernism as a matter of principle. Such architects built in a modern idiom whenever they could or thought it appropriate, but would just as readily build in a different style if the commission required it. It was precisely this readiness to compromise, to contextualise and to respond to clients' demands which for architects such as Freud and Jaretzki underpinned their moderately successful careers after emigration to Britain, and which stopped them from re-emigrating to another country.

Looking at Jaretzki's work in Britain between 1933 and 1938, all but one of his designs suggest that with emigration he had renounced modernism altogether. This was a house called 'Pennsylvania' in Prestbury, Cheshire, of 1936 [68a-c]. Here, the architect made use of all his previous experience with modern design, adapting it to the requirements of its British inhabitants' liking for domestic comfort on the

[7] See *Homes and Gardens*, Sept. 1936, pp.121-3.

one hand and the specifics of its location on top of a hilly site on the other. Thus the opening sentence of an article on the residence stressed: "Comfort and aspects are well considered in the planning of this Cheshire house...," before continuing to praise the successful planning, which not only made it a comfortable home, but also made the best use of the exposed site while ensuring "healthy and enjoyable living at all seasons of the year."[9] Indeed, the concern for health, sunshine and fresh air, seems to have been an important factor in the planning of this two-storey house. It consists of flat-roofed cubic volumes in facing brick, with two curved projecting bays and adjoining garage. The tight curve of the bay on the northern façade contains a staircase [68a], while the bay on the southern façade forms a glazed semicircular extension to the lounge, surmounted by a projecting sun bathing terrace on the first floor [68b]. All bedrooms and the nursery face south and possess French windows leading onto the terrace, which has tubular metal railing. A strong emphasis on outdoor living can further be detected in the large garden veranda and the play area provided on the garage roof for the children. Many banded windows, designed to match their aspect (their size increasing from north to south), provide maximum sun and long views into the surrounding countryside.

It is interesting to see how effortlessly this modern design integrates itself into the landscape of its English setting. This effect is aided by the use of natural materials in the architecture: rustic multi-coloured exposed brick for the elevations is combined with rough natural stone for the base of the house and the terraced lay-out of the carefully landscaped garden. Such choice of materials, in keeping with

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[8] Photograph in possession of Eve Haas.

local traditions, could be seen as further evidence of a tendency among émigré architects identified above as New Contextualism. In the Cheshire house, integration into the surroundings is further achieved through the calm and restrained elevations and the unobtrusive character of the modernism. It was this 'sensible' element of design that appealed especially to the British, the fact that Jaretzki planned the house logically and functionally according to requirements and conditions rather than a certain modernist effect. Hence the architect was praised for avoiding mistakes at points "on which an over-enthusiastic modernist is apt to err", and complimented on "[resisting] the temptation to make the staircase bay in this [northern] front almost entirely of glass."[10] The Prestbury house particularly impressed contemporary critics by being *comfortable*; it was described as an "example of comfort-planning throughout."[11] This emphasis on comfort, rather than, say, functionalism, suggests that a concern for the upkeep of certain traditional values in domestic architecture was still greater in Britain than the interest in modernism itself.

That the prevalence of traditionalism in Britain did not go unnoticed by Jaretzki is illustrated in his other work of the period. This consisted predominantly of private residences around North London, executed in a traditionalist idiom which integrates easily into the suburban environment. In his four detached houses at Nos. 42 to 46 Netherhall Gardens and No. 72 Maresfield Gardens in Hampstead of 1937-8 [69-72], for instance, clear references to the surrounding architecture can be detected.

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[9] *The Ideal Home*, Oct. 1936, p.266
[10] ibid.
[11] ibid.

Above all, the red brick elevations with prominent white detailing match the traditional styles of the houses in the area, many of them built in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Jaretzki's houses feature an array of traditionalist and quintessentially English elements of style, mainly borrowed from the classical language of architecture, particularly the Georgian town house: multi-panelled, vertical sash-windows with prominent white surrounds, semicircular fanlights above entrance doors, arched white entrance porches with fake rustication, curved door hoods, heavily moulded cornices topping rounded bay windows, classical urns on parapets and garden walls and even multiple tall chimneys. The façades of the four houses are individualised in their design, but are unified by their classical appearance resulting from a symmetrical lay-out.

However, although Jaretzki's houses have a distinctly British, specifically neo-Georgian look, the references to traditional British architecture are not used and combined in a very orthodox fashion. While on the façades elevations rise above the roof line, thus (in true Georgian fashion) partially hiding the hipped roof beyond a parapet, and suggesting a flat roof, in other parts of the houses the roof projects forward beyond the elevations in a fashion more typical of nineteenth-century architecture. Both recessed and overhanging roofs are features that occur frequently in the architecture of the surrounding residential area, but it is unusual to see them in combination. Further details reveal that an architect experienced in modernist design, rather than a convinced traditionalist, was at work here: the raised façades with their plain cornices are indeed designed to suggest a flat roof, while slight recesses and projections of sections of the otherwise plain and flat

elevations give the faint impression of cubist massing. Features such as the rounded corners and corner windows at No.42 Netherhall Gardens [70], the semicircular double bays at No.44 [72], or the roof balcony and basement garage at No.72 Maresfield Gardens [69] all indicate the hand of a modern architect who manipulated elements of traditional English architecture in a somewhat playful and unorthodox fashion.[12]

Jaretzki's choice of style assumes a different aspect when one considers the fact that he built the houses at Maresfield and Netherhall Gardens not as a result of a commission, but speculatively after having acquired the plot.[13] The intention of selling the houses on the open market after their completion certainly influenced the émigré's design decisions, for he needed to ensure that they would appeal to the typical British buyer interested in houses in the Hampstead area. Thus while the restrained façades and details such as curved corners and balconies on thin pillars give away the architect's interest in modernism, the overall neo-Georgian appearance of the houses fits with the traditional surroundings; it was this traditionalism which was likely to appeal to the average Hampstead buyer. In other words, Jaretzki probably chose a traditionalist style not only because it fitted into the existing environment, but also because he regarded it as a better selling point. The traditionalist design was a conscious choice of the architect rather than a condition imposed by the local planning authorities, who did not always prohibit the erection of modernist buildings - as can be seen in close-by 48 Maresfied Gardens,

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[12] This hybrid approach to design was, however, not unknown among some British architects, as can be seen in Oliver Hill's design for Chelsea Square.
[13] According to Eve Haas, interview with the author, Sept. 23rd, 1997

a flat-roofed modernist house by Herrey-Zweigenthal.[14] However, having been erected during a period of economic difficulty shortly before the outbreak of war, the four Jaretzki houses were not sold until after the war, which caused financial problems for the architect. Remaining empty during the war, No.44 Netherhall Gardens served instead as an air raid shelter and its garden as an allotment for the architect's family.[15]

While discussing the reasons for Jaretzki's choice of traditionalism in his British work, one important element should not be forgotten: the role of the client. Although the houses at Maresfield and Netherhall Gardens were built speculatively, Jaretzki also built a number of privately commissioned residences in the area, such as at Nutley Terrace [73], Platt's Lane and Holly Walk, in very similar style. Some of the clients for these houses were British, which suggests they specified to the architect that their houses should be built in traditional British style. However, (although it is not quite certain which buildings can be ascribed to their patronage) Jaretzki also had several German clients who commissioned houses in British traditionalist style. For this, one piece of oral evidence has survived in the architect's family history. In discussing with the architect the fact that he would prefer a traditional British house, one German client is thus said to have exclaimed (in heavily accented English):

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[14] See Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain, 1919-1939* (London, 1977). Zweigenthal was a Vienna-born architect who seems to have worked in Berlin for several years before emigrating to Britain. His claim to fame was the design of the first multi-storey car park-cum-garage in Berlin, the 'Kantgaragenpalast', in 1929-30 (with Richard Paulick). See *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, May 6th, 1931, p.226. The house in Maresfield Gardens, built in 1939, is rather individualistic and slightly playful in design, with its large sheets of glass for the principal windows and its balcony railings with polka-dot cut-outs.

[15] See *Ham & High Property Express*, Oct. 22nd, 1993, pp.1 and 5.

"We feel English: we like fireplace and we like kipper fish!"[16] Apart from the somewhat amusing understanding of what characterises the quintessence of Englishness, this anecdote demonstrates vividly how a desperate desire to merge into the culture of the new environment, prevalent in large sections of the émigré community, could find an outward expression in architecture. In other words, in the same way that some patrons commissioned modernist buildings in order to give themselves an air of avant-garde cosmopolitanism and set themselves apart from tradition, some émigrés consciously commissioned residences in a traditional English style in order to integrate themselves into mainstream culture and to avoid appearing foreign. Therefore, just as one should avoid the assumption that all émigré architects from Germany built in a modernist style, one should also avoid the assumption that émigré clients exclusively wanted to commission modernist buildings. Instead, for some clients - as for some architects - architectural commissions served as a vehicle for the expression of their desire for integration into British culture.

While observing that Jaretzki chose to build in a traditional style, it is interesting to note that he deliberately avoided the more playful, romantic nineteenth-century idiom derived from the Arts and Crafts Movement, for which there would also have been prototypes in the surrounding area. Instead, the émigré decided on the restrained and sober forms of eighteenth-century English traditions, which he considered most closely resembled modernist aesthetics and principles. With this decision, Jaretzki followed a pattern which I have suggested was true of the

[16] According to Eve Haas, interview with the author, Sept. 23rd, 1997.

majority of German émigrés: if they used the vocabulary of traditional British architecture, they gave preference to the classically-derived Georgian style. Simultaneously, though, it is likely that Jaretzki followed a contemporary fashion for the neo-Georgian in British architecture, of which he was bound to have been aware, not least through his partnership with a British architect. In adopting an architectural style for reasons of fashion and public demand, Jaretzki followed a principle he had already employed in his German work. In other words, while the stylistic idiom was different - modernist forms in Germany, Georgian forms in Britain - in both cases the architect's designs responded to what he perceived as the predominant national trend. The radical change in his work after emigration - from modern to traditionalist - was thus as much a result of Jaretzki's overall individual approach to design as of his specific response to the émigré situation, the two being unified by his strong disposition to adapt. The architect responded to the émigré situation by making an effort to become as English as possible; it is only at second glance that traces of his German work can be detected in his English designs. In this respect his work differs from that of several other émigrés, like Bernd Engel, which was strongly characterised by a visible tension between British conventions and German elements.

In this respect, the case of Jaretzki underlines the importance of the cultural environment of the receiving country within the discussion about architectural emigration. In the face of an overwhelming traditionalism in Britain Jaretzki adopted a neo-Georgian idiom, but had he emigrated to a country in which modernist forms had been popular he would almost certainly have continued the development of the

language of *Neues Bauen* he had begun in Germany. In this context his former partner Wiener makes for an interesting comparison. In Germany, Wiener and Jaretzki's work bore similar characteristics, indicating a similar approach to design and leaning towards the Moderate Modern. Yet while Jaretzki's emigration to Britain stifled his interest in modernism, Wiener emigrated to Palestine, where around the middle of the decade the architectural climate had turned overwhelmingly in favour of modernism, allowing him to develop his architectural style in a modern direction. Almost undoubtedly Jaretzki would have done the same had he emigrated to Palestine rather than Britain. As it was, however, he proved himself fully prepared to adapt to the mainstream of British architectural culture, to a greater extent than any other German architect in Britain. In this respect Jaretzki provides the counter-pole to émigrés such as Mendelsohn, who stood at the other end of the scale as regards adaptation and response to the new environment. For the architect himself his chosen approach proved so successful that, disregarding occasional excursions into functionalism for industrial designs,[17] he continued in a traditionalist mode after the war, despite the fact that Britain's architectural climate at the time was swinging towards modernism.

Many other German architects chose similar strategies to Jaretzki to cope with their difficult position as émigrés, and accepted commissions for a variety of building types in a variety of styles. For the majority of the émigrés, the need to survive and continue practising within the design field was, understandably, stronger than the

[17] At the beginning of the war, for example, Jaretzki was commissioned with the design of a munitions factory. He probably owed this commission to his experience (he had built a nitrogen

wish to pursue a certain stylistic line. Amongst those whose search for work in the inter-war period also led them to traditionalism were Peter Caspari, a close friend and later partner in practice of Jaretzki's, and Bernd Engel.

Only 25 years of age on his entry into Britain in 1933, Peter Caspari was one of the youngest of the émigré architects. He had set up in private practice in Berlin only a year prior to his emigration and therefore had relatively little design experience when he started out in Britain. Yet this was not necessarily a disadvantage, for absence of experience was probably accompanied by absence of a single fixed architectural approach. Being less set in his ways than many of the older architects, therefore, it was easier for Caspari to adjust to the new conditions after emigration. Indeed, the early date of arrival, his age and adaptability seem to have formed a recipe for success for the émigré, who managed to set up in private practice in London only a year after his arrival, following a period of work as an assistant at the Central London Building Company, subsidiary of Davies Estates. Having familiarised himself with English building regulations, architectural trends and traditions during that time, he began to produce buildings of curiously British character, producing both designs which imitated traditionalist styles in the manner of Jaretzki and designs which fused modernist elements with local traditions tailored to British tastes.

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factory near Beuthen at the end of the First World War) as well as his thorough knowledge of materials and techniques, especially as regards steel frame construction.

In the latter category, his work included several blocks of flats which, although contemporary in style, conformed to the type of modern flat design which, as we have seen in connection with Fränkel's work, had become accepted in Britain. Caspari's West End Court of 1938-9 [74a,b], for instance, strongly resembles a block of flats called 'Regency Lodge' at Swiss Cottage, built in 1935 by Robert Atkinson [75].[18] West End Court, a chunky, U-shaped block of flats, with four storeys and a flat roof, appears like a smaller and only slightly modified version of Atkinson's design. Both designs feature the rounded corners and curved corner windows which were very popular in Britain at the time. Caspari's elevations are lively in design, especially on the southern façade (facing Greencroft Gardens), where vertical elements, such as the tall staircase windows, and horizontal elements, such as the white cornices framing horizontal windows on the corners, are balanced against each other. Window shapes and arrangements are varied, but all windows are of the same height. The middle section of the façade projects forward, forming a broad, curved double bay, while simultaneously rising a little above the roof line of the neighbouring sections. This central section is matched in height and curves by the corner units, which are slightly recessed from the abutting sections. The polygonal staircase windows sunk into niches, as well as the slight variation in colour of the brick finishes in different parts, further animate the elevations. Caspari's West End Court might, at first sight, seem "odd in Victorian West Hampstead,"[19] but on closer inspection several measures taken to minimise the incongruity between the architecture of the flats and their environment can be

[18] See Paul Spencer-Longhurst (ed.), *Robert Atkinson 1883-1952*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1989), pp.52-3
[19] Elain Harwood, "Gazetteer", in Benton, *A Different World*, p.126

detected. The height of the blocks, for instance, matches that of the Victorian buildings in the street, as do the elevations of facing brick. The red brick finish, as well as the oriel windows on the western façade, were part of the restrictions imposed on the architect as part of the commission.[20] Overall, this block probably integrated itself more successfully into the surroundings than other blocks of flats nearby, which had become a common sight in the Hampstead area during the 1930s.[21] It is apparent that Caspari designed with anglicised eyes. The fact that he was not short of commissions in the 1930s indicates that his way of adapting architectural design to British preferences by fusing modernist elements with British traditions, in a similar way to Freud, ensured success for the émigré architect.

Yet, not all of the buildings Caspari designed in the inter-war period had as contemporary a feel to them as his blocks of flats, and many stylistic incongruities can be found in his work of the period. The reason for this was that, like most other émigrés, he could not afford to reject commissions. Thus the architect designed a "number of 'Hampstead Garden Suburb type houses' in Hampstead Garden Suburb itself, in St. John's Wood and elsewhere in London"[22] during the 1930s, meaning that he adopted a vocabulary based on British architectural traditions for many of his designs of the period. For Caspari, as for Jaretzki, traditionalism was a safe

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[20] See *The Architects' Journal*, Sept. 7th, 1939, p.343

[21] Such as Embassy Court on West End Lane in West Hampstead, just a few minutes walk from Caspari's West End Court.

[22] Benton, *A Different World*, p.148. (Benton does not provide further details or source references for her observation.) Unfortunately, so far a variety of attempts to find out the precise addresses for these traditionalist houses have largely remained futile. Peter Caspari himself, resident in Canada and 90 years of age, does not recollect details of his British work, and he claims to „have no pictures, photographs or newspaper cuttings of my work from 1933 to 1938" (letter to the author, November 1997). The information provided by the architect himself in his RIBA Nomination papers

means of keeping his practice going. However, the architectural climate in Britain must have frustrated the young architect in the long run, for in 1950, the same year as Fränkel left the country for the USA, Caspari emigrated to Canada, where he built up a successful practice centred around modern large-scale public architecture.

Bernd Engel (later Bernard Engle), on the other hand, managed to do just that without leaving Britain. Engel's post-war London practice was large and successful, and its products extensive and uncompromising in the modernity of their approach.[23] Yet, prior to this, his career path had taken him in various directions. Unable to continue payment for his studies due to the inflation, Engel had left Germany in 1923 in order to work in the USA, where he soon found employment with Ernest Flagg. Having gathered his first experiences with modern construction and design here, he returned to Hamburg in 1925 in order to join his father Semmy in practice. The work of the Engels was centred around the design of modern blocks of flats and other contemporary housing. The many blocks of flats which father and son executed in Hamburg during the 1920s and early '30s, such as at Dehnhaide and Vogelheide,[24] make use of the architectural language of *Neues*

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only cites two buildings. The collections of the Hampstead Garden Suburb archive, which might throw more light on Caspari's work of the period, has been inaccessible for the last three years.

[23] The bulk of Engel's post-war work consisted of large scale redevelopment schemes for civic and town centres, designed during the 1960s, such as at Bradford, Aylesbury, Stockport etc. He was also responsible for the design of Brent Cross shopping centre, but died before its completion. I wish to thank Mrs. Engle for providing me with information on her late husband's life and work.

[24] See *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, Aug. 17th, 1929, p.20 and Jan. 15th 1930. Despite the seeming abundance of their local work, the Engels were architects of a relatively low national profile. Their work does not feature in any contemporary national publications, nor are they mentioned in later

*Bauen*, while for the most part remaining faithful to the tradition of brick building prevalent in the North of Germany.[25] Similarly, the Engels' 1928-29 design for a set of flat-roofed terraced houses at Sofienterrasse in Hamburg [76], near the river Alster, also embraces a functionalist vocabulary,[26] despite showing curious traces of the grandeur of the imposing town houses in the surrounding area, whose white-rendered elevations it echoes. Inventive planning makes cunning use of the site: a central path cutting half way into the site separates the two halves of the building, evoking the appearance of detached rather than terraced houses. The exposed brick cornices provide a horizontal emphasis which, together with semicircular bays projecting from the street façade, suggest a Mendelsohnian influence.

After restrictions on Jewish architects' practice had began to make themselves increasingly felt in the previously less radical Hamburg, Bernd Engel and his wife emigrated to Britain in 1935. A year later, the émigré joined the English architect Clyde Young in partnership in his West London practice, and continued it after Young's death in 1948. For many years, the Young/Engel partnership was a commercially highly successful enterprise, and it can be assumed that Engel profited from the knowledge and contacts gathered here when he came to build up his own practice in the 1950s. In contrast to the post-war period, during the first

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studies such as Hermann Hipp, *Wohnstadt Hamburg. Mietshäuser der Zwanziger Jahre* (Hamburg, 1992).

[25] For differences in regional traditions, specifically in relation to their influence on modernism in inter-war Germany, see John Zukowsky (ed.), *The Many Faces of Modern Architecture - Building in Germany between the World Wars* (Munich & New York, 1994). While Hamburg is often neglected in the history of German modernism, the works of architects such as Fritz Höger, Fritz Schumacher, Karl Schneider and Hans and Oskar Gerson show that new trends did not by-pass Hamburg architecture. They also demonstrate that expressionist and functionalist vocabularies could be reconciled with the regional tradition of brick building.

years of his collaboration with Young Engel was forced to distance himself from the modernism he had adhered to in Germany and to adopt a language of traditional British architecture for many of the commissions that came into the office. Being at the top of the list of popular historical styles, the neo-Georgian was the most important architectural mode for Engel to master. That he did so successfully can be seen in the design he executed with Young for a house at Stanmore, Middlesex. This house, called 'Queenswood' [77a-c], is an example of neo-Georgian design in its plainest, most serene form. The simple pinkish-grey brick box features the typical white sash windows, central door with hood surmounted with fanlight and low hipped roof set back behind a plain parapet. Additionally, the garden façade is adorned with a semicircular bay extension to the dining room on the ground floor, forming a balcony above. This curved unit can be assumed to be a design idea by Engel rather than his partner, because it echoes the precise shape and lay-out of the bays at the Sofienterrasse houses in Hamburg [76].[27] It betrays the modernist in Engel, despite the fact that the modern appearance of the bay is partially denied by the articulation of the windows as a separate vertical units rather than as a horizontal band.

The curved Mendelsohnian bay with balcony was one of Engel's favourite design features: it can be found in many other Engel/Young designs, including the Kipling Memorial Buildings at the Imperial Service College at Windsor. Here, however, the two bays, stuck onto the end of each of the two wings of the strictly symmetrical

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[26] Original newspapers and photographs in possession of Mrs. Engle. See also Volkwin Marg & Reiner Schröder, *Architektur in Hamburg seit 1900* (Hamburg, 1993), p.111

design, appear out of place in terms of style as well as size and shape. Their domestic appearance is at odds with the grand public style of the three-storey building, the exterior of which is characterised by a pitched roof and rhythmically arranged vertical windows, as well as other features derived from various British sources. Once more, the architects found particular inspiration in the Georgian style. In tune with the general national trends at the time, Engel and Young seem to have regarded a style close to the neo-Georgian as the most suitable one for public buildings such as schools or offices. This is also illustrated in a block for commercial and office use which the partnership designed for a site at 24-29 Hyde Park Square. The historicising exterior of this imposing building demonstrates that Engel, in so far as he was involved in the design, was both able and willing to adopt a traditional British language of architecture where the commission and environment made it necessary. As a result, Nos. 24-29 Hyde Park Square blends in smoothly with the historic façades of the surrounding buildings.

But it appears that although circumstances required Engel to make his designs fit into traditional British environments, his heart was still in the contemporary style in which he and his father had been practising in Hamburg. That Engel did not distance himself completely from modern forms during his first years of working in Britain can be seen in his 1937-38 designs for Nos. 21 and 23 Manor House Drive in Brondesbury Park [78a,b]. In these two neighbouring houses, which were built to complement each other, Engel appears to have 'sneaked in' as many modern elements as possible. Thus a curious mixture of conventional and modern elements

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[27] However, such bays can also be found in eighteenth-century English architecture, for instance at

dominates the design. The main body of each house, two storeys in height with a hipped roof, resembles a standard English suburban home of the inter-war period. However, in front of this house the architect has placed a flat-roofed volume which occupies one side of the street façade. One corner of this volume is curved and contains a hall and staircase on the interior, the other corner houses a garage on the ground floor. The curved units of Nos. 21 and 23 are designed as mirror images, thus giving a semi-detached feel to the detached houses and repeating the play with visual connection and separation of pairs of houses already found at Sofienterrasse. A variety of materials introduces contrasting colours into the elevations: the predominant yellow facing brick is offset by white stone details, such as cornices and window dressings, and white-painted front and garage doors, while the curved corner is emphasised in red brick. On the rear of the house Engel has once more employed his favourite semicircular bay, here containing a terrace on the ground floor and a balcony above, the latter extending along the full breadth of the house. This balcony, formed by a recessed top storey, is accessed by French windows from the bedrooms, and bears a close overall resemblance to the bay and sun terrace in Jaretzki's Prestbury design [compare 78 and 68]. The parapet at the edge of the balcony is adorned with in-built teak flower boxes, a design feature of strikingly German character.

On the whole, the Brondesbury Park houses cannot hide the German roots of their designer. It is interesting to see how Engel uses a standard formula of a conventional British suburban house, but fuses it with modern elements originating

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Park Lane in London (facing Hyde Park) or at the sea front in Brighton.

in the vocabulary of *Neues Bauen*, especially evident in the flat-roofed volume on the street façade (which also seems derivative of the Sofienterrasse design). What the hybrid quality of the Brondesbury Park houses suggests is that there were two partially opposed forces at work during the design: one was the need to integrate it into both its immediate environment and British building conventions, the other the desire to adhere to the parameters of a previously practised modernism. (A third factor may have been the influence of a wealthy and demanding woman client,[28] whose interventions may account for the uneasy combination of features.) In other words, this design articulates the quintessential émigré architect's dilemma, the choice between assimilation into mainstream British architecture and continuation of a personal pre-emigration style. Whether Engel's attempt at reconciling these opposing forces in the Manor House Drive designs was altogether successful is however arguable.

Other designs by Engel of the inter-war period also express the above dichotomy between adapting to British traditions and adhering to forms absorbed in Germany. Amongst these, probably the most successful in terms of a reconciliation of traditional and modern forms was the design for a country house at Hendon, Middlesex. The plan of this house [79] is a virtually exact copy of the left-hand house of the pair in Brondesbury Park [78b], featuring the same rounded staircase corner and semicircular bay with balcony above, but the consistently ivory-rendered elevations at Hendon are better integrated with the design. The hybrid quality of the house can best be seen in the roof area: here, a traditional hipped roof is

[28] According to Mrs. Engel (interview with the author, Oct. 7th, 1997).

intersected by a 'sun parlour' - flat-roofed, U-shaped and fully glazed - which leads to a roof garden above a cubic volume containing the downstairs lounge. Further evidence of a co-existence of national-traditional and imported-contemporary elements in Engel's work can be found in a small detached house at Tenterden Gardens [80a,b], built for a German client called Dannenberg. This design combines a conventional hipped roof and brick elevations with features such as a winter garden and a garage. The tiny windows on either side of the entrance porch, protected with a metal grill, are a typically German feature which occurred in Engel's previous work, and also in the German work of Freud and others.

However, despite the German references, the dominant appearance of the designs of the Engel and Young practice is for the most part one of traditional English character. In contrast to the work Engel executed after founding his own practice in the 1950s, his work in collaboration with Young cannot be described as modernist. The conventional character of the partnership's work is underlined by the fact that although it appeared frequently during the years 1938-40 in *The Builder*, none of it was ever published in the more avant-garde journals such as *The Architectural Review* or *The Architects' Journal*. Yet the fact that after the war Engel proceeded to head an influential practice renowned for uncompromisingly modern architecture and planning schemes probably indicates that the stylistic language the German architect employed during his partnership with Young was born less out of free choice but out of the constraints imposed by his partner, by clients and by the economic situation. Thus Engel's pre-1945 work is probably best described as the

work of an architect trying to be as modern as possible within the restrictions imposed by a traditionalist practice.

## 3.b.iii. Carlludwig Franck and Peter Moro

As this chapter has demonstrated, the number of German émigré architects who were given the chance to execute buildings in inter-war Britain while simultaneously sustaining a commitment to modern design was very limited. However, among the few exceptions were those architects who found employment as assistants in a large modern practice, where they would work as draughtsmen for most of the time but also received the occasional individual commission. To this category belong both Carlludwig Franck and Peter Moro, two relatively young architects who had completed their education just before emigration to Britain.[29] Shortly after arrival in Britain both émigrés had settled into positions as assistants with Tecton, the largest and most important modern architectural practice in the country at the time. Franck's neat and quick drawing style quickly made him a favoured draughtsman in the Tecton office, but he was rarely entrusted with the design of a full commission. It seems that before the outbreak of war he was only responsible for the execution of one complete building: the extension of a factory in Tottenham owned by the Gestetner family, a family of pre-1933 Hungarian émigrés and successful

[29] Franck's dates of birth and emigration are 1904 and 1937, Moro's 1911 and 1936.

businessmen.[30] This factory unit [81] (now demolished) is a plain but assertive modernist design, a flat-roofed two-storey block whose horizontality is underlined on the street façade by an uninterrupted band of flush window panes on the upper floor.

Peter Moro's design activity outside the Tecton practice before his internment at the outbreak of war was also limited to one building only,[31] executed together with Richard Llewelyn-Davies, with whom he worked in partnership during 1939-40.[32] The 1938-39 Moro/Davies design for a house at Birdham, near Chichester [82a-d] is one of the most interesting and forward-looking designs produced by an émigré architect in Britain before the war. In this house, called 'Harbour Meadow', the white cubes of the International Style have disappeared completely and been replaced by a modernism of surprising maturity and independence. Functionalist principles of rational planning have been digested and subjected to a fresh approach in which functionality is married to aesthetics. Despite its tendency towards playfulness, the design of 'Harbour Meadow', which evolved over various stages from neo-Georgian into modern,[33] is innovative and pays close attention to detail and the specific

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[30] The Tottenham factory extension is illustrated in John Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin. Architecture and the Tradition of Progress* (London, 1992), p.257. Allan attributes the design to Franck (for Tecton), but puts an approximate date of 1935 to it. However - if Franck was the architect responsible for the building's design - this date is wrong, because the architect only started working for Tecton in September 1937, the same month he emigrated to Britain.

[31] Although in 1938 Tecton had also entrusted Moro with the design of an entrance screen for the MARS exhibition at the New Burlington Galleries in London of the same year.

[32] Richard Llewelyn-Davies (later Lord Llewelyn-Davies, 1912-1981) was still a student at the Architectural Association when he and Moro, who already was a fully qualified architect, received the commission for the house at Birdham. Having qualified in 1939, in his later career Davies became a renowned teacher and town planner, responsible among many other projects for the master plans of Washington New Town, USA (1966) and Milton Keynes (1967). See obituary in *The Times*, Oct. 28th, 1981.

[33] For amusing and fascinating anecdotes on how the architects manipulated the clients from their original wish for a neo-Georgian design into the approval of the final, modernist one (a process

requirements of the clients. Hence in order to separate the living space of parents, children and servants,[34] the architects laid out the house in two linked wings on a Z-shaped plan - an idea reminiscent of the 'bi-nuclear' planning principle advocated by Marcel Breuer.[35] The wings are designed as two-storey flat-roofed brick boxes, the one to the west containing the living and dining areas as well as parents' bedroom, the one to the east housing kitchen, services and rooms for servants, children and guests. The western block is cunningly conceived as box of dark brick within a box of light-coloured brick. The outer box is rendered 'transparent' through the generous use of glass, terraces and balconies running along the west and south façades. From a double height alcove containing a sun loggia on the first floor stretches a balcony supported on thin pillars which marks one side of a courtyard. On the eastern side, the court is framed by a heavy rubble wall - reminiscent of Breuer's 1936 Gane Pavilion - into which two openings are cut, each accentuated by a thick concrete box frame [82c]. One of these forms the entrance gate to the courtyard, the other a window to an inner yard surrounded by service rooms. From the rubble wall, a covered walkway runs southward [82b], connecting the house with a removed garage building. The spread-eagled appearance of the overall plan - described by Moro as "...the shape of half a swastika"[36] - can thus be ascribed to a frank articulation of function. Between the two living blocks a gap of

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involving the use of large plans and toy cars) see Moro's own account in Twentieth Century Architecture, No.2, *The Modern House Revisited* (London, 1996), pp.9-14.

[34] Interestingly, this division is typical of those found at large British country houses of the previous centuries.

[35] See chapter 3.a.iii. However, Breuer's concept is centred around the division between sleeping and living areas, which is not the case in Moro and Davies' design. Here, the division of living areas according to their occupants had been specified by the clients.

[36] Peter Moro, *A Sense of Proportion: Memoirs of an Architect* (1990), quoted in Twentieth Century Architecture, No.2, *The Modern House Revisited*, p.14. Moro gives this description in the context of recounting how in c1940 a bomb exploded near the Birdham house, as a result of which he was

approximately 8-10 m is occupied by a staircase area with spacious landing and ground floor entrance lobby [82a]. The southern elevation of this entrance unit is almost entirely glazed, allowing free sight of its elegantly dramatic central feature, a free staircase with slow-rising 180° curve and slender metal railing. This smooth, elliptical curve is beautifully echoed by the wall at the back of the stairs. The recessing of the first storey and the crowning of the space between the wings with timber rafters (which serve as a sun break) add further visual interest to the design of the entrance elevation. The use of large areas of glass in the entrance unit and elsewhere in the house is one of many features contributing to one dominant visual theme: the play with concepts of outer and inner space. Throughout the whole design there exists a tension between enclosed and open, contained and free-flowing space. The skilful 'open box' device of the western block can be seen as evidence of this, as can the large concrete frame which forms the east entrance to the courtyard, or the general layout of the court as a contained and sheltered yet open and accessible unit.

A variety of influences from contemporary architecture in Britain can be detected in the Birdham design. Above all, many features of the house, such as the Whipsnade-derived curved concrete screen on the sun roof, betray Moro's Tecton training. The wealth of building materials used - brick, timber, concrete, glass, metal, stone - echoes the diversity of surface texture characteristic of buildings designed by the Tecton practice in the later 1930s, such as Highpoint II, on the detailing of which Moro had worked. The lively appearance of the contrasting

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suspected of collaborating with the German Luftwaffe by having created a landmark „in the shape

materials of the elevations at 'Harbour Meadow' is carried over into the interiors, also designed by the architects,[37] where a variety of different materials and interesting colour schemes are employed. In other respects, too, the Birdham house echoed contemporary developments in British architecture, which, as explained above, for the last few years had been moving away from the rigidity of the International Style, towards natural materials and an overall loosening of rigid forms and formulas. As part of this development, the idea of the articulated, sprawling plan with sheltered courtyards, free-standing walls and covered walkways had achieved some popularity. Gropius and Fry's Impington Village College [29], as well as Ernö Goldfinger and Gerald Flower's 1937-8 house at Broxted in Essex, for instance, give evidence of this trend, of which Moro and Davies certainly were aware at the time. Looking at the white concrete box frames in the rubble wall at Birdham, their similarity to the frames used by Goldfinger in buildings such as his own house at Willow Road in Hampstead of 1936 also suggests the influence of the work of the Hungarian.[38] Overall, the Birdham house is more firmly rooted in the context of *British* modernism of the late 1930s than in the tradition of *German* modernism.

Looking at Moro's design in the context of the work of other émigré architects in Britain at the time, it is significant that an architect of younger age shows such a fundamentally different approach to design from many of his older German

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of half a swastika" for them on their way to Portsmouth.

[37] Moro was responsible for much of the interior design and fittings at 'Harbour Meadow': "I designed many of the light fittings and furniture..." (Moro, *A Sense of Proportion*, p.12). In the interiors, too, the influence of Tecton is visible in details such as the cow-skin sofa, first used in Lubetkin's penthouse flat, on which Moro had worked during his time in the office.

[38] Although they could also be derived from Tecton's houses at Haywards Heath of 1934-5.

colleagues. Comparing it for instance with the work of Kaufmann, Moro's senior by nineteen years, who came to Britain with a wide range of design experience, the discrepancy becomes obvious. Moro had experienced the Weimar years in Germany, and he had shown a definite preference for modern design in his last years of study, but he had not been as immersed in the culture of *Neues Bauen* as those architects who had actually practised it. For this reason he and other younger generation émigrés were more open-minded, which made it easier for them to respond to Britain as a new working environment. Thus Moro took a much greater inspiration from the contemporary architecture he had seen after entering Britain than from designs he would have seen in Germany before 1934. It is interesting to note the important role which Lubetkin and Tecton played in this context. Tecton had much to offer for Peter Moro, who has described his period of working for Lubetkin as one of the best times in his working life,[39] and continued to display a Tectonian influence throughout his post-war career. He founded his own practice in 1952, after collaborating with Martin and Matthews on the design of the Royal Festival Hall the previous year, and proceeded to become a specialist in the design of modern theatres. However, it is important to remember that, as mentioned above, the modernist consistency which can be found in Moro's work is an exception rather than the norm in the pattern of architects' responses to the émigré situation in Britain.

Comparing the findings of chapters 3.a. and 3.b., several important conclusions can be drawn. The case studies have shown that, although responses to the émigré

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[39] Interview with the author, June 13th 1996

situation varied strongly, no German émigré architect remained immune to their new working environment in Britain. Their readiness to change and adapt, and the form which these adaptations took, were to a large extent determined by their respective pre-emigration experience. Here, both the extent of their international reputation and their overall attitude to modernism played a decisive role. On the whole, the greater the architects' fame and the stronger their commitment to modernism, the less likely they were to alter the general direction of their design habits. While the architects discussed in the previous chapter (3.a.) responded to the émigré situation by revising and freshly contextualising their designs *within* the framework of modernism, the architects whose work is analysed in this chapter (3.b.) overcame financial and professional difficulties by stepping *outside* this framework, either occasionally or on a regular basis. In other words, those who had practised modern architecture out of personal conviction were less likely to renounce their beliefs than those architects who had been designing in a modern idiom merely in order to jump on the bandwagon of architectural fashion. The 'natural chameleons' of architecture, of whom Ernst Freud might be regarded as a good example, on the whole had less of a problem executing an eclectic variety of commissions and adjusting to any sets of conditions after emigrating to Britain. It is interesting to note that those architects who were not prepared to compromise the modernity of their designs, or who feared for their personal reputation, such as Gropius and Mendelsohn, left Britain in disappointment even before the outbreak of the Second World War. Those, on the other hand, who showed more tolerance of inter-war conditions were frequently rewarded with fulfilling positions in post-war Britain, a place where the architectural climate was strongly pre-disposed towards

renewal and modern approaches. For this the case of Bernd Engel serves as a good example.

Although it is impossible to identify a single common pattern of response to the émigré experience among German architects in Britain, it is nevertheless possible to discern certain common strands in their attempt to achieve a *modus vivendi* with British architectural culture. One universal change was the retreat from large-scale public commissions into the realm of small private designs (though this adaptation was enforced by contemporary economic and cultural circumstances rather than a deliberate choice on the part of the émigrés). Other patterns emerge when comparing for instance Kaufmann's house at Welwyn Garden City [51], Freud's Frognal Close designs [64], *Jaretzki's Cheshire house [68] and Fränkel's houses at* Stanmore [54], all of which show easily detectable similarities. These and other German architects responded to British traditions and the conditions of the building industry by replacing the smooth white-rendered elevations of many of their previous buildings with the rougher, natural appearance of exposed brickwork. (In fact, in the early phase of modernism in Britain the émigrés were generally more prepared to substitute traditional materials for smoothly rendered walls than their British modernist colleagues.[40]) At the same time, however, they retained on a

[40] There are various possible reasons for this. The most likely explanation lies in the fact that modern architecture gained foothold in Britain much later than on the continent. While around 1935 British architects were only just beginning to embrace the aesthetics of the International Style, the émigrés had all experienced several years of 'white architecture' in pre-Nazi Germany. Thus by the time they emigrated many were ready for change and less determined to express the modernity of their designs via new materials than British architects. In the face of native building traditions, the use of exposed brick was a logical choice. Additionally, some of the émigrés, especially those from the North, were already disposed to brick design in Germany. Another reason lay in the conditions dictated by the British building industry at the time: the lack of expertise in concrete structures, the

small scale the massing of cubic volumes that had been typical of the buildings of *Neues Bauen* in Germany. Another common characteristic of the émigrés' designs was a more thorough and modern approach to planning than that displayed by their British colleagues. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, the British work of the German émigrés in almost all cases reveals a stronger desire for integration and contextualisation than their pre-emigration work. This tendency, which I have discussed under the heading of New Contextualism, manifests itself particularly in a new approach to materials (expressed in the frequent use and mixture of brick, stone and wood), but also in the often careful attention paid to landscaping as a means of integrating architecture with its environment. Further characteristics typical of the Germans' design responses included a homage to English Georgian architecture. Thus neo-Georgian elements made repeated appearances in the work of the Germans, either in an abstracted way (such as in the careful observation of architectural proportions and elegant, rationally composed elevations or in the juxtaposition of smoothly rendered white surfaces and facing brick) or in a more literal one, as in Jaretzki's Hampstead houses [69-72]. The sense of affinity between Georgian architecture, derived from a classical language, and the principles of modernism was widespread amongst the Germans, and there is evidence of this in virtually every émigré's work in Britain. Finally, should one wish to summarise the common strands of change in the émigrés' work, this would perhaps best be done under the heading 'New Sensibility': sensibility to architectural tradition and context.

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availability of traditional materials and the abundance of brick building expertise in the country spoke strongly in favour of brick.

# 4. EXCHANGE

## 4.a. *Joining Forces*: Contribution and Attribution in Anglo-German Partnerships

One of the policies drawn up by the Ministry of Labour regarding the admission of foreign architects into Britain was to refuse entry to those who sought positions as architectural assistants or draughtsmen, that is as salaried employees in the profession (see 1.b.).[1] In order to heighten their chances of gaining an entry permit, foreign architects had to convince the authorities that they had the means and experience to work as principals in Britain, that is to function as employers, not as employees. The rationale behind this policy was to limit the possibilities of foreigners taking away jobs from British nationals seeking architectural employment. For this same reason the easiest, and often the only, way for the émigrés to gain permission to enter and work in Britain - other than to set up their own practice - was to find a British architect to join in practice. The principle of a partnership is that of an association of "two or more persons carrying on business in common with a view to profit",[2] the partners being jointly and severally liable for the acts of the partnership, thus sharing both profits and losses. It was the fact that German partners in joint practices were potential employers which lay at the bottom of the Home Office's encouragement of Anglo-German partnerships. This chapter will examine the nature of such partnerships, how the respective partners gained from their alliance, and how they themselves rated their experiences. It will show that, for

[1] This policy was not followed in all cases and some architects were allowed into the country as specialised architectural assistants at the discretion of the Home Office. See Chapter 1.b.

the most part, partnerships were arrangements of mutual gain. The émigrés in particular welcomed a partnership with a British architect, because, although it did not free them from financial responsibilities, it reduced the element of insecurity and risk which was involved in setting up independently in an unfamiliar country. The chapter will further examine the work generated by Anglo-German partnerships, discussing issues of attribution and contribution in joint designs and the extent to which an exchange of ideas took place. The aim is to fill a gap in the existing literature by providing a comprehensive and detailed picture of both the function and realities of Anglo-German partnerships.

Entering a partnership was a popular way for German émigré architects to start in practice in Britain, so much so that in fact there were more émigrés searching for partners than there were British architects willing to team up with a foreigner. James Wolfsohn, for instance, when first enquiring about the possibility of his coming to Britain in 1937, was interested in "joining up with somebody in England."[3] But he remained unsuccessful, and when he came to Britain in 1938 he had to set up independently. Similarly, Felix Ascher, who had decided to emigrate only at the beginning of 1938, tried hard to find a British architect with whom he could partner up. He wrote to his cousin Gertrud Bing (émigré and deputy director of the Warburg Institute which was transferred from Hamburg to London several years previously) in February 1938: "My wish is to do what the architect Engel did and find an English colleague to join up with."[4] And again in July, with increasingly intense pleading for Bing's help: "The only possibility I see for finding a foothold there [in England] is by starting as a partner with another

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[2] As defined by the Partnership Act of 1890, which was valid in the 1930s and still applies today. See David Chappell & Christopher Willis, *The Architect in Practice* (Oxford, 1992)
[3] See RCP (RIBAA), Box 1, Folder 2a.

architect. I am still eagerly trying to find such a person, and my urgent request to you is to support me in this."[5] Yet Bing was not able to help, and Ascher finally entered Britain without a partner; in 1939 he set up his own office instead. The reason for Ascher's and other émigrés' failure to find a partner lay largely the fact that in 1938, with war looming, few British architects were prepared to make such a commitment. Thus Carter from the RIBA wrote in 1938: "It is almost impossible to find architects just now who are willing to take on partners."[6] Economic factors certainly played an important role in British architects' reluctance to join a foreign architect[7] - in as much as they might have felt resentment about the fact that they were asked to share what little work they had with another architect,[8] as did a degree of xenophobia.

Yet despite such reservations, during the earlier 1930s there were still a considerable number of British architects who were prepared to take on a German architect as a partner. Interestingly, the warmest welcome by the British profession was given to those émigrés who possessed an international reputation as modernists. Thus, as Fry has put it, "the great ones paired off":[9] Walter Gropius entered a partnership with Maxwell Fry, Marcel Breuer partnered up with Francis R. S. Yorke, Erich Mendelsohn joined Serge Chermayeff,[10] and Eugen Kaufmann teamed up with Frederick Towndrow for six years. One reason

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[4] Letter Felix Ascher to Gertrud Bing, Feb. 20th, 1938, in German, WIA, IC
[5] Letter Ascher to Bing, July, Feb. 27th, 1938, in German, WIA, IC
[6] Letter Carter to Godfrey Samuel, Sept. 13th, 1938, BAL, SaG/83/3
[7] It needs to be kept in mind that by 1933-4 Britain was still fighting the last effects of a recession which had greatly reduced the workload of most architects, and was experiencing renewed economic problems in 1938. See 2.b.
[8] Could a feeling of resentment be present for instance in Fry's autobiography, when he observes that the "...refugees... [were] using me amongst others as a bogus employment agency."? Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches* (London, 1975), p.146
[9] Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches*, p.150

for the positive reception of Gropius, Breuer and Mendelsohn was that each had their spokesman amongst a small circle of British advocates of modern design, notably Jack Pritchard, Morton Shand (who spoke German) and Sir Charles Reilly.[11] The motive of these and other Englishmen for encouraging the German's move to Britain was (humanitarian reasons aside) an eagerness to import into their own country the avant-garde ideas which had matured on the Continent in the previous decade and which they wished to see echoed in Britain. Jack Pritchard's desire to have Gropius in his country was so strong that he arranged and sponsored a partnership between the former Bauhaus director and Fry.[12] Though lacking the privileged treatment accorded to the famous modernists, other German émigrés also succeeded in finding British partners: Bernd Engel joined Clyde Young, Hans Jaretzki teamed up with James S. Bramwell, Fritz Ruhemann joined Michael Dugdale and Albrecht Proskauer partnered up with Bernard Le Mare. While some of these partnerships lasted for a long time - Engel and Young worked together for almost two decades - others were more short-lived. Peter Moro and Richard Llewelyn-Davies' collaboration, for instance, only lasted for one commission. Arthur Korn's partnerships, first with Yorke, then with Fry, were also very brief, as was Marianne Löhnberg's association with Clive Entwistle. Yet although each partnership was different, not only in duration, but also in character, they had one thing in common: each

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[10] Serge Chermayeff was born a Russian named Sergius Ivanovich Issakovitch, but had lived in England since the age of ten, receiving his education at Harrow and Cambridge. In 1928 he married the Englishwoman Barbara Maitland May and assumed British nationality.

[11] Although Jack Pritchard was chiefly involved with Gropius and Breuer, he had also made personal acquaintance with Mendelsohn in 1931, when he spent a few days with him in Berlin and was deeply impressed by his work. (See letter Pritchard to Mendelsohn, March 13th, 1931, PA (UEA), PP/9/27/1.) Charles Reilly, head of the Liverpool School of Architecture, also admired Mendelsohn's work. (See his *Scaffolding in the Sky* (London, 1938) and J. Sharples et. al., *Charles Reilly and the Liverpool School of Architecture*, exhibition catalogue (Liverpool, 1996).) Reilly was one of the men who helped Mendelsohn in extending his Home Office work permit from five months to five years.

[12] See Reginald Isaacs, *Walter Gropius* (Berlin, 1983), p.190

consisted of one individual from a German background and one from the British scene, thus representing a marriage between two architectural cultures of pronouncedly different character and history. Whether these were 'marriages of convenience' in which each partner went more or less his own way, or to what extent they represented a forum for cultural exchange and mutual benefit will be discussed below.

The first issue to be explored is why the idea of a partnership would have been attractive to those involved. For the émigrés, the most obvious attraction was the fact that it guaranteed them entry into Britain. Being engaged in a partnership with a British architect also strongly increased the likelihood of short-term work permits to be renewed by the authorities. The British partners, who were usually well connected within the architectural profession as well as with British society as a whole, frequently acted as referees in matters both of architecture and character, or even as last-minute saviours in urgent emigration matters. Thus for example when Peter Moro, at the time working on his first independent commission, received a letter from the Home Office in December 1938 stating that he was not allowed to stay or work in Britain any longer and that he should "...accordingly arrange to leave the United Kingdom on or before the 31st instant,"[13] it was only through the influence of his partner Davies,[14] actively pulling strings among his acquaintances, that Moro's work permit was finally renewed for a year. The British partners were sometimes also the

[13] Letter Home Office to Peter Moro, December 1938, shown to the author at interview, June 13th, 1996.
[14] Later to become Lord Llewelyn-Davies. For his biographical details see references in Chapter 3.b.iv.

individuals who nominated the Germans as Licentiates or Fellows of the RIBA.[15] This was the case for instance with Engel and Jaretzki.[16] Given the fact that in inter-war Britain the gentlemanly practice of calling for and providing references was still important in the architectural as well as other professions, personal contact with a well-connected British partner was invaluable to a German architect with few British connections. It was equally useful in terms of building up and maintaining a network of clients, which mostly worked on a similar basis of personal recommendation. Frequently, the émigrés could simply share the design responsibility for a commission which the British partner had obtained; in some partnerships it was almost entirely the role of the British partner to bring in the commissions, while it was the Germans who executed most of the practical design work. Moreover, when it came to the actual face-to-face dealing with clients in joint commissions, the presence of a native English speaker was often essential in overcoming simple linguistic problems, as well as a certain snobbery and underlying xenophobia about the émigrés. In general, the straightforward practical advantages of partnerships for the émigrés must not be underestimated. Thus a partnership offered the Germans support in every respect from language to difficulties with measurements, building regulations, subcontractors, planning permissions, matters of law etc. The émigrés could also profit from their British partners' familiarity with the country itself, its landscape and architectural traditions as well as their knowledge about national tastes, preferences and customs.

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[15] An independent application for membership in the RIBA was not possible: future members had to be proposed by existing members of the Institute.

[16] Engel was proposed by his partner Clyde Young in 1947 (see Engel Nomination Papers, Licentiate, No.6231, July 1947, RIBAA); Jaretzki by his partner James S. Bramwell, also in 1947 (see Jaretzki Nomination Papers, Licentiate, No.6267, August 1947, RIBAA).

However, as regards modern design and especially modern constructional methods it was generally the Germans who could teach their British partners. Educated in a system which placed a stronger emphasis on the teaching of the nuts and bolts of architectural construction and was quicker at incorporating new materials and methods into the curriculum, even the youngest amongst the émigrés surpassed their British colleagues in constructional knowledge. Marianne Löhnberg, for instance, observed about Clive Entwistle, whom she briefly joined in partnership, that he "knew nothing about construction."[17] And Chermayeff on his own, without the technical expertise and imagination of Mendelsohn, would have been unlikely to design the Bexhill Pavilion as a steel framed construction.[18] Apart from advanced technical knowledge, many of the Germans also offered a wealth of experience with Continental modernism for the British architects to learn at first-hand. Fry, Yorke, Chermayeff and possibly also Towndrow all profited intensely from this exchange. In many cases, commissions were given to a joint practice solely or mainly on account of the German's reputation and experience.[19] In other ways, too, German architects attracted commissions. The presence of an émigré, possibly Jewish architect in the practice enhanced the chance of obtaining commissions from the Jewish and émigré communities in Britain, which were continuously growing in size. In dealing with these clients, then, the émigré partner's knowledge of German

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[17] Marianne Walter, interview with the author, June 30th, 1997. At the time of the partnership Walter had qualified as an architect only few years previously, while Entwistle was a young architect who had left architectural school without qualification. For details on Entwistle see note 30.

[18] The fact that it is indeed the first major building with an all-welded steel frame in Britain underlines this point.

[19] This was for instance the case with the Windsor project, commissioned from the Gropius/Fry partnership because of Gropius' expertise in modern high-rise building, and Impington College, a commission based on Gropius' experience with progressive educational architecture. Equally, the cardinal reason for Breuer and Yorke's commission for the 'Garden City of the Future' project lay in Breuer's knowledge of modern materials.

could be a useful tool, as could his understanding of the culture from which the clients came.[20]

On the whole, Anglo-German partnerships were give-and-take arrangements in which each partner could gain from whatever the other had to offer. However, the way in which work and responsibilities were distributed within the partnership varied, as did the amount of interaction between the partners. Thus while a good deal of collaboration existed in most of the partnerships, including those of Gropius/Fry, Breuer/Yorke and Moro/Davies, others seem merely to have existed on paper. Kaufmann and Towndrow, for instance, though friendly with each other on a personal level, went their own ways professionally. At first they shared an office, but not, for the most part, any of their work; later on they even worked from separate premises.[21] And while in almost all other partnerships work was published under the names of both partners, regardless of the input of each into the project, Kaufmann's published designs never cited Towndrow's name.

However, not all partnerships were based on principles of equality and mutual independence. For some British architects the main object in taking on a partner seems to have been to alleviate their own workload without having to employ paid assistants. Interestingly, these were mostly partnerships in which a German architect teamed up with a traditional-minded, rather than modern-minded British

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[20] This was probably the case in the commission for a small modern house at 2 South Parade, executed by Dugdale and Ruhemann for the émigré Leo Neumann.

[21] Kaufmann has described the office he shared with Towndrow in Fleet Street, Middle Temple, as his "first foothold in the City of London." (Eugen Kaufmann, *Memoirs of Eugene Kent*, unpublished typescript, BAL, p.223) The German's "budding practice" (ibid., p.224) and commercial success, however, soon resulted in his moving into an office of his own in Bloomsbury, where he stayed until 1939 while still in partnership with Towndrow.

architect. Jaretzki's and Engel's British partners were for the most part concerned about being able to attend to their many social commitments while their German partners looked after the sizeable practice. It seems that Bramwell and Young were both gentlemanly figures in the establishment[22] who - quite in the tradition of the profession in the nineteenth century - devoted more time to their clubs, sporting activities and dinner parties than actually standing behind the drawing board.[23] Thus Mrs. Engel has described her late husband's partner Young as a "sleeping partner", an "establishment figure" who did very little work and had little contact with his much younger German partner.[24] Indeed, much of the work executed and published under the name of Engel and Young during the period shows clear signs of the hand and mind of the German architect; the drawing style and writing in the plans for joint projects can in many cases be attributed to him.[25] Of course, such a distribution of responsibilities also had its advantages. An active social life and an extensive social circle of relatively wealthy persons was a very good source of clients and commissions. Undoubtedly much of the commercial success of a practice like Young's was due to the architects' social connections and skills, backed up by a strong drawing office. For the German partners, this arrangement created an ambivalent situation of dependency and independence: while to a certain extent relying on the flow of commissions the British partner brought into the office, within the practice they were given a relatively free hand. And while offering the

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[22] No further biographical information can as yet be attached to the name of James Bramwell. Clyde Young (1871-1948), son of an architect, had received his education at South Kensington as well as France, Belgium and Italy. His work consisted mainly of prestigious public commissions, such as the New War Office and Southampton University, and designs for an aristocratic clientele, such as Elveden Hall and Westbury Manor. See obituary in *The Builder*, May 14th, 1948, Vol.174, p.585.

[23] According to Eve Haas, Jaretzki's daughter, Bramwell spent a lot of time watching the cricket. (Interview with the author, Sept. 23rd, 1997)

[24] Mrs. Engel, in interview with the author, Oct. 7th, 1997.

advantage of never being short of work, these partnerships left room for the émigrés to execute a certain number of projects independently. Young himself confirmed this to have been the case in his partnership with Engel: "Engel has collaborated with me since 1936 as well as carrying out numerous jobs on his own account, factories, conversions and private residences etc."[26]

It could also happen that a British architect quite consciously set out to exploit the weak position of an émigré, tempted by the fact that instead of paying for an assistant, he could simply take on a desperate émigré as a partner. Such exploitation was experienced by Marianne Löhnberg (later Marianne Walter). Despite four applications to the Home Office the young architect, who had come to Britain in March 1937, had been refused permission to continue her job as an assistant to Tubbs, Duncan and Osborne. The only way for Löhnberg to be allowed to work and to avoid being deported back to Germany was to find a British partner to join in practice.[27] Thus when one night in October or early November 1937 she was introduced at an architects' ball to an elegant young Englishman with "the manner of a lord"[28] and an architect's office in New Bond Street who offered to take her on as a partner, Löhnberg was naturally extremely pleased. "I am so glad to tell you the Home Office will agree to my working over here in partnership with Mr. Entwistle." she wrote soon after to Godfrey Samuel.[29] Clive Entwistle, alias 'Clifford',[30] who did not as yet possess

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[25] As identified by Lillian Lançon, Bernd Engel's daughter and herself an architect, who worked with her father. Interview with the author, Oct. 7th, 1997.
[26] Proposer's statement accompanying Engel's RIBA nomination. Engel Nomination Papers
[27] Having only qualified as an architect two years previously and having no money at all, setting up her own practice was not an option. For further biographical details see references in chapter 1.a.
[28] Marianne Walter, *An Exile in England*, unpublished typescript (1995), p.49.
[29] Letter Marianne Löhnberg to Godfrey Samuel, Nov. 14th, 1937. BAL, SaG 84/1.
[30] 'Clifford' is the name Walter gives him in her autobiography, apparently wishing to keep Clive Entwistle's name secret. (See *An Exile in England*, pp.49 ff.) However, she confirmed his

any formal qualification, had told Löhnberg that although he was not short of commissions he had too many social engagements to do all the work, and that he could not afford an assistant yet.[31] Hence they came to an arrangement which, although based on a heavy imbalance of responsibilities, seemed to work reasonably well for a while:

> Though about five years younger than I [Clifford] was much more wordly wise. He was strikingly good looking, with an uncle in the House of Lords and there he sat at his beautiful desk supplied by Heal's, but he owed his tailors money and he did not like work. He was really gifted and could sketch out some brilliant ideas, which were left to me to knock into a practicable shape. I often arrived at the New Bond Street Office when he was still in bed... [Then] he would go out and not come back all day. At weekends he was always invited to some country house or other.
> I did his work and started to get some work of my own. [At times] ...I worked like a slave, including weekends... I earned enough now to exist and even to have a proper meal from time to time. Clifford never paid me. I paid him for the use of his very nice office by doing his work. I lived by doing my own. The 'partnership' existed on paper only...[32]

Yet, 'Clifford' Entwistle proved a man of despicable character. Much to Löhnberg's annoyance he had a habit of not paying his creditors and leaving her to deal with them. Adding to this, one day she entered the office and found another man, Vivian Pilichovsky,[33] working in the office, who had been

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identity in an interview with the author, June 30th, 1997. Entwistle (1916-76) joined MARS in 1938 and designed a house for the Ideal Homes Exhibition in 1939 in collaboration with Le Corbusier; otherwise knowledge about his earliest career is sketchy. Between 1945 and 1963 he worked as a designer and architect in London (with Peter Yates as his chief draughtsman) and in Paris, where he translated some of Le Corbusier's writings, then set up office in New York in 1963. (See *Architectural Review*, Vol. 164, Oct. 1978, p.204. An article on Entwistle by Ian Boyd Whyte is also awaiting publication.)

[31] Walter, *An Exile in England*, p.49. Entwistle came from a well-to-do and well-connected family. His mother Vivienne was a society photographer; his half-brother Tony Beauchamp, also a photographer, later married the daughter of Winston Churchill.

[32] ibid., pp.49-53. One of the projects Löhnberg executed for Clifford were designs for the Ideal Homes exhibition at Olympia. She herself had obtained a commission for an estate of prefabricated timber houses in Ayrshire, for which she evolved a number of different housing types.

[33] Amnon Vivien Pilichovsky (later: A. V. Pilley, 1907-1982) was born the son of artist parents in France. After the family settled in London in 1914, Pilichovsky studied architecture at the Architectural Association until 1933. (See obituary, in *The Times*, Aug. 21st, 1982.) During the

employed by Entwistle as his partner and been told that Löhnberg was the office assistant. Though both outraged by Entwistle's behaviour, Pilichovsky and Löhnberg briefly continued working in his office. Meanwhile, the British architect continued his disrespectful treatment of Löhnberg, on one occasion, when the Romanian Ambassador was expected to visit the office, even asking her to "put on a frilly white apron" and serve tea.[34] In the end, the Englishman's financial problems escalated and his 'partners' unexpectedly found themselves forced to pay his debts.[35] By this time, however, Pilichovsky had found himself a new office at Down Street Mews in Piccadilly and soon after made one room available for Löhnberg to set up her own office there.

Löhnberg's exploitation was caused by the position of extreme weakness she had found herself in as a young, inexperienced émigré architect. In this respect, her situation was unusual compared with most Anglo-German partnerships. Especially in modernist partnerships, the distribution of power was often quite the reverse. Gropius, Mendelsohn, Kaufmann, and perhaps also Breuer, all assumed a somewhat dominating role when collaborating with their British partners.[36] In order to illustrate how this worked I will examine more closely the joint practices these four architects worked in and the work generated by them. However, the following discussion does not intend to give a complete and detailed list of the work of each partnership (for this see Chapter 3.a.), but merely to look at a representative selection of designs.

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1930s, he executed several modernist houses in London, Kent and Surrey, some in collaboration with Lubetkin.

[34] ibid., p.56

[35] This event demonstrates the practical implications of the principle of shared legal and financial responsibilities within a partnership.

[36] In the case of Gropius and Mendelsohn this was reinforced by the age difference between them and their younger British partners. Their dates of birth are: Gropius 1883 - Fry 1899, Mendelsohn 1887 - Chermayeff 1900.

It is perhaps easy to take for granted the fact that German modernists would enter partnership with nobody other than a modernist in Britain. However, between 1933 and 1935, when the architects in question entered Britain, the number of British architects fully committed to modernism was still fairly limited (see 2.a.). Many of the modernist architects active in Britain at the time were foreigners themselves, such as the Russian Lubetkin or the Hungarian Goldfinger, or were already bound up in partnerships, as was the case with Connell and Ward, later Connell, Ward and Lucas, two New Zealanders and one Englishman. And unlike the émigrés, who each had over a decade of experience with modern design, their British partners had only recently found their way to modernism. Thus in 1930, only a few years before joining up with Gropius, Maxwell Fry, trained at Liverpool School of Architecture, was still designing neo-Georgian buildings, such as his 'Ridge End' in Virginia Water, Surrey. Only in 1933 he fully committed himself to modern design, as is illustrated in his conception of Sassoon House and his involvement in the formation of MARS during that year.

Serge Chermayeff had shown an early interest in modern design. He had first familiarised himself with Continental avant-garde developments in the mid-1920s when he had spent extensive periods studying and travelling abroad. Yet although on his return to Britain he succeeded in translating his Continental experiences into modern designs which suited British tastes, for several years Chermayeff remained an architect of interiors only.[37] Only in 1933, a few months

[37] Chermayeff's career as a designer had begun in 1928 when he joined Waring and Gillow to develop the Modern Design Studio, later forming his own practice as an „interior architect" and setting up Plan Ltd, a company marketing modern furniture. In 1932 Chermayeff participated in

before his partnership with Mendelsohn, Chermayeff's first building, the Shann House in Rugby,[38] was completed and he was accepted as a Fellow of the RIBA. Chermayeff had admired and personally known Mendelsohn for several years. He had featured his work extensively in his 1931 „Film Shots of Germany" published in *The Architectural Review*.[39] In 1933, Chermayeff had also been involved in the initial phases of project Académie Européenne Méditerrannée, an international art academy which Mendelsohn and others intended to found on the Côte d'Azur.[40]

It was partially through his contacts with Chermayeff and C. H. Reilly, who was also involved in the Mediterranean Academy project, that Mendelsohn was encouraged to come to England.[41] He finally accepted Chermayeff's offer to join him in practice in September 1933, and the newly formed partnership set up office in the Pantheon in Oxford Street. Although probably largely based on the younger architect's admiration for the German, initial personal affinity between the two architects could have been reinforced by the similarity of their

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founding the Twentieth Century Group to promote modern design. Amongst his interiors of the period are those executed in collaboration with Coates and McGrath for the BBC Broadcasting House in London. See Alan Powers, obituary of Chermayeff, in *The Independent*, May 14th, 1996.

[38] The previous year Chermayeff had also produced an unexecuted design for an English Country House. See *Architectural Review*, Nov. 1932, pp.214-5.

[39] Serge Chermayeff, "Film Shots of Germany", in *Architectural Review*, Nov. 1931, pp.131-133. These artistic photographs of new German architecture were taken on Chermayeff's 1931 trip to Germany with Wells Coates and Jack Pritchard. Of Mendelsohn's work it was especially the Metalworkers' Union building and the Schocken store in Chemnitz which seem to have fascinated Chermayeff.

[40] Mendelsohn had started to concentrate on this project after his emigration to Holland in March 1933. Other protagonists were Ozenfant and Wijdeveld, but a long list of exponents of the European avant-garde of art, design and architecture were involved in supporting the project. By summer 1933 not only had a plot in Cavalière been bought for the academy to be built on, but a complete teaching curriculum, including the names of the teachers, had been drafted. With Mendelsohn's departure for England, political instability in France and controversies among the organisers, however, this Mediterranean academy never materialised. See Ita Heinze-Greenberg, "Das Projekt Mittelmeerakademie und die Emigration 1933", in Regina Stephan (ed.) *Erich Mendelsohn - Gebaute Welten* (Ostfildern-Ruit, 1998), pp.216 ff.

[41] See Charlotte Benton, "Bauten in England und die Partnerschaft mit Serge Chermayeff 1933 bis 1939", in Stephan, *Mendelsohn*, p.224

backgrounds: they were both Jewish, well-educated and from a wealthy family background. From the onset, the architects' respective experiences determined the power relations within the office: while Mendelsohn was an architect of international reputation and years of experience in architectural design, Chermayeff, though a relatively experienced interior designer, stood at the very beginning of his architectural career. Mendelsohn's immediate dominance is illustrated by the fact that the Nimmo House at Chalfont St. Giles [20], a commission which Chermayeff had obtained just before entering the partnership, was executed according to Mendelsohn's ideas. His strong-willed persona has also been described by former members of the joint office.[42] Hence it is Mendelsohn's style which characterises the output of the partnership.[43]

This stylistic dominance partially resulted from the working method used. This was essentially an extension of the method Mendelsohn had employed in his German office: Mendelsohn recorded his architectural visions and ideas in quickly and freely drawn expressive sketches, often in numerous variations; his office staff then translated them into detailed, workable plans. The existence many such sketches for buildings in Britain indicate that Mendelsohn continued this practice after emigration. It is also confirmed by former staff of the London office. Thus Birkin Haward has described his role there as an assistant to Mendelsohn as that of "...a draughtsman to draw alternative 1/8 scale plans, elevations etc. following his freely sketched and developing ideas."[44] The fact

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[42] See Barbara Tilson, "Serge Chermayeff and the Mendelsohn/Chermayeff partnership", in Modern British Architecture (eds.), *Erich Mendelsohn 1887-1953*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1987), pp.59-67

[43] There are obvious visual parallels for instance between the layout of the Rupenhorn residence and the Cohen House, or between the staircases at The Metal Worker's Union building, the Schocken Store at Stuttgart, the Bexhill Pavilion and Shrubs Wood.

[44] Letter Birkin Haward to Louise Campbell, Aug. 18th, 1992, possession of Dr. Campbell.

that Mendelsohn had Hannes Schreiner, who had worked with him in Berlin, as his assistant in London, provided a further element of continuity.

Despite his powerful influence as a designer, however, in terms of finding work the émigré was largely dependent on Chermayeff, who possessed an extensive circle of social and professional connections on which he could rely for commissions: "[I never], it seemed, sought commissions. They simply came." Chermayeff recalls.[45] And although Mendelsohn's input is clearly identifiable in all the partnership's designs, the influence of the younger partner must not be underestimated. Given that, while based in London, Mendelsohn opened another practice in Palestine and was thus frequently absent from the Oxford Street office for long periods, Chermayeff's contribution to the partnership's work is perhaps more significant than is often assumed. During Mendelsohn's absence he was the principal of the office and in charge of the projects. When in early 1935 the German architect had left for Palestine with the intention of basing himself there for at least one year,[46] Chermayeff was left in charge of the completion of the Bexhill Pavilion and given particular responsibility for the restaurant, auditorium and library [16]. After that time, as Barbara Tilson points out, "Mendelsohn's influence was to be confined to the broader initial conception of the design[s]..."[47] Thus at ICI Manchester, Mendelsohn's input is detectable in the overall layout of low, stretched-out wings, but the black-clad elevations and the detailing are Chermayeff's work. Similarly, at the London Gilbey offices of

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[45] Serge Chermayeff, "An Explosive Revolution - the Architect Looks Back", in *Architectural Review,* No.166, Nov. 1979, p.309

[46] "I have retained my partnership in London and have bought myself free for one and a half years in order to make a start in Palestine." Letter Erich Mendelsohn to Oskar Beyer, quoted in Oskar Beyer, *Erich Mendelsohn - Letters of an Architect* (London, New York, Toronto, 1967), p.140

1937 [86] the lay-out and concave façade (obviously derivative of the Metal Worker's Union building in Berlin of 1929), as well as the existence of sketches by Mendelsohn, demonstrate Mendelsohn's intense involvement with the project in its initial stages. However, it can be assumed that it was Chermayeff who saw the project through to its completion, for not only was Mendelsohn absent from the office during much of the time of its execution, but he also never claimed authorship of it.[48] Chermayeff's important role in the partnership is also underlined by the fact that "lengthy discussions took place between the partners and ... Chermayeff undertook, notably for the White City Project and the [Southsea Hotel project]..., thorough analyses and breakdowns of the financial, planning, material and functional aspects involved and the presentation of a detailed report."[49]

Only after the final dissolution of the partnership in 1936 did Chermayeff find the chance to detach himself from the direct influence of Mendelsohn and to develop his own architectural style, which is most powerfully expressed in the design for his own house at Bentley Wood. This house, completed in 1938, is an elegant timber exercise in proportional study and meticulous detailing which speaks its own modernist language without using Mendelsohnian vocabulary.[50] Nevertheless, much of the architectural skills displayed at Bentley Wood

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[47] Tilson, "Serge Chermayeff...", p.65. For ICI building see *Architectural Review*, March 1938, pp.118ff. and *The Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, March 7th, 1938, p.44. In both only Chermayeff is named as the architect.

[48] When the building was published in *The Architect and Building News* (30th July 1937, pp.149-151), only Chermayeff was cited as the architect.

[49] Tilson, "Serge Chermayeff...", p.62

[50] Unfortunately, Chermayeff was not to be able to enjoy his new home for long, for he was forced to emigrate to the USA soon after its completion. Subsequent owners have done much damage to Chermayeff's design through alterations. See „The tragedy of Bentley Wood", in *Architectural Review,* No.166, Nov. 1979, p.307

Chermayeff owed to what Mendelsohn had taught him. He himself has stressed in later life that he profited and learned from the partnership:

> My brief partnership with Erich Mendelsohn after he fled from Nazism was invaluable to me. I learnt architectural organisation and design of some complexity including both schematic presentation and meticulous detailing. Our winning the Bexhill Pavilion competition provided the essential experience in work supervision which fell to me.[51]

Unlike the Russian-born, well-travelled, cosmopolitan Chermayeff, Maxwell Fry was a more typical Englishman. Fry had first learned of the latest developments in German architecture through his active involvement with the Design and Industries Association (DIA) and its links with the German Werkbund. Having seen the possibilities being explored in the new architecture on the Continent not only converted Fry to modernism, but also made him impatient with the DIA and its ideals,[52] eventually leading to his resignation from the DIA[53] and increasing involvement with the MARS group. Through MARS, by then the British wing of CIAM, Fry first met Gropius at a London CIAM meeting in May 1934; and again the same month when chairing Gropius' talk on the occasion of the opening of an exhibition of his work at the RIBA in London. By then, Fry had established himself as one of the most important practitioners and exponents of modern architecture in inter-war Britain, which made him the most suitable candidate when Gropius needed a partner to join in Britain shortly after.

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[51] Chermayeff, "An Explosive Revolution...", p.309

[52] He felt that the organisation was "held back by a Lethaby world of honest craft" (Fry, *AutobiographicalSketches*, p.137) and stuck in Garden City ideas during a time when the rest of Europe was expanding its architectural horizons.

[53] This resignation was brought about by a dispute over the fact that during the preparations for a joint MARS/DIA exhibition an unnamed exhibition director, whom Fry regarded as "uncommitted to the ends in view" was employed, who in turn commissioned Oliver Hill with an exhibit that „was entirely out of spirit with [the] aims". (See ibid., p.145.)

Despite his modernist convictions, Fry's ideas were nevertheless solidly rooted in a British perspective, fostered by his cultural background as much as an architectural education of neo-Georgian bias. (He even lived in an eighteenth-century London town house.) It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that as regards the Gropius/Fry partnership much emphasis has been placed, both by contemporary observers and historians, on the fact that Fry's English perspective was the ideal counterbalance to Gropius' German experience. Together, supporters such as Pritchard and Morris hoped, they would be able to translate continental modernism into a language suitable to British conditions. Hence in the context of the Windsor project [24], for instance, Pritchard felt that "The combination of Gropius and Fry should be important ... Fry's own very English point of view combined with Gropius' experience should produce a rather fine scheme."[54] Equally, a fundraising appeal for the Impington project [29], published in *The New Statesman*, praised the appropriateness of the partnership by stressing the supposed complimentary character of the architects:

> Mr. Fry brings to the partnership a feeling for the English tradition and a highly developed practical sense, while Professor Gropius possesses one of the most original architectural minds of our time, deeply interested in the social aspect of building and most accomplished in using all the results of modern research.[55]

But how much of a forum for exchange and collaboration did the partnership really provide? There is no doubt that for Fry, whose knowledge of Continental

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[54] Letter Pritchard to Leonard Elmhirst, May 10th, 1935, PA (UEA), PP/15/4/375, p.2
[55] Letter Keynes to Henry Morris, April 4th, 1936, quoted in Isaacs, *Gropius*, p.209

modernism at the time was based entirely on contemporary publications,[56] collaboration with Gropius presented the chance of gaining extensive first-hand insight into modernist design, construction and thought, and offered him a variety of new perspectives. In Gropius, Fry had also found a partner who confirmed and expanded the aims for which the English architect had worked for several years. Gropius, in return, was "impressed by Fry's work and its serious approach. ... [Fry], more than anyone else, understood both Gropius and the English well enough to interpret them to each other."[57] In retrospect, Fry himself has confirmed that a certain mutual understanding and complementary duality existed in the partnership:

> ...we felt a mutual sympathy from the first meeting,... When I came to work with [Gropius] the simple humility of his approach to what we had in hand dispelled the difference between us in age and stature. He seemed to enjoy my agility though it was foreign to his more ruminative mind. My feelings came out in my wrist, while his still circled in his head, but he made a sort of play of this duality, a Prospero and Ariel game that suited us entirely because it brought out what complemented each other.[58]

In interviews in later life Fry has admitted to a more antagonistic attitude than the above account suggests,[59] describing Gropius as a "ponderous", domineering and occasionally arrogant personality, expressing some resentment at the fact that he had to share his newly set up private practice with a partner,[60] and indicating a strong dislike of Gropius' German-Jewish draughtsman

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[56] "It is hard to overestimate the value of [Yorke's *The Modern House*]..., especially for someone like myself that had *not* the money to travel." Maxwell Fry in obituary "memoir of F. R. S. Yorke..."

[57] Isaacs, *Gropius*, p.191

[58] Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches*, p.148

[59] See Cormier, *Gropius*, pp.47-51. Interviews conducted in 1984 by Cormier.

[60] Fry had only recently got out of his previous partnership, Adams, Thompson & Fry, a practice with a strong emphasis on town-planning, and set up on his own. When Gropius arrived on the scene in 1934, Fry had several commissions but "little enough to share" (Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches*, p.148). He has also complained that Gropius did not share with him the contacts he

Proskauer. But these feelings are always outweighed by his emphasis on the positive sides of the partnership and his genuine admiration for Gropius.[61] This admiration can be seen in Fry's work even before the partnership. Fry not only sustained in Britain the idea of the social function of architecture and the occupation with low-cost housing which Gropius and other Continental architects had begun during the previous decade, but his early modernist work also emulated design features used in Gropius' German work (see 4.b.). After the formation of the partnership in 1934, Fry's independent work continued to display a strong influence of Gropius. Thus his Sun House in Hampstead of 1935-6 shows an abundance of features which appear in the 1935 Levy house in Chelsea [26], including rounded corners, continuous living room fenestration, a long L-shaped balcony and jutting planar elements supported on minimal thin steel pillars. Some of these were also to re-appear in another house by Fry at Kingston in Surrey of 1937. Although it is possible that Gropius in return took some inspiration from Fry's work - it could for instance be argued that the Wood House in Kent was at least partially inspired by Fry's use of timber at 'Little Winch' [87] [62] - the influence Gropius exerted on his British partner was significantly larger.

Gropius, like Mendelsohn, was conscious of his superior position due to greater age, experience and stature, and used this to make entire projects his own and

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made with potential clients (see Cormier, *Gropius...*, p.48) and that he „stole" clients from him (ibid., p.99).

[61] This is not only expressed in his autobiography, but also emerges in other writings by Fry. In his *Art in a Machine Age* (London, 1969), for example, he praises Gropius repeatedly: "Noone else had the same intellectual grip of the situation, the real feeling for industry, the modest and single view of the idea of work, a morality so much in tune with the associated disciplines." (p.107)

[62] From there, the chain of influence continued: Proskauer, who collaborated with Gropius on the house in Kent, shortly after in 1936 built a modernist timber house in Woodford Green,

to assume control over design decisions in projects executed in collaboration with Fry. Contemporary correspondence and retrospective accounts by members of staff of the Gropius/Fry office confirm Gropius' dominant personality. Like Mendelsohn, Gropius carried over his German working method into his London office. In his method, to paraphrase Fry, Gropius was the head and his assistants the wrists. In Berlin, collaborators such as Meyer, Fieger and Neufert would produce designs according to Gropius' architectural ideas, as explained to them verbally - a method described by Posener as "creative assimilation".[63] In Fry's office, Gropius could continue working in a similar way because Fry showed both enough understanding of and deference to his design ideas. (Later on, in Gropius' partnership with Breuer, the lack of such compliance would render the partnership dysfunctional after a short time.[64])

Several of the projects which are generally cited as products of the Fry/Gropius partnership were in reality designed by Gropius alone. Fry himself has stressed that he had no part in the execution of the Wood House for Donaldson in Kent [30].[65] For the Windsor project [24], too, Fry has vehemently denied all involvement.[66] Fry's part in the design of the Christ's College extension [28] was also minor, and he took no part at all in any of the design work Gropius

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Essex, in collaboration with Bernard Le Mare, which in turn inspired the latter to do the same at Kirkby Stephen some two years later.

[63] See Winfried Nerdinger (ed.), *The Walter Gropius Archive*, Vol.1 (London, New York & Cambridge/Mass., 1990), pp.xvi-xix, for a more detailed account of Gropius' method of collaboration. For details on the partnership with Adolf Meyer see Annemarie Jaeggi, *Adolf Meyer: der zweite Mann. Ein Architekt im Schatten von Walter Gropius* (Berlin, 1994).

[64] By the time the partnership was founded in 1937, Breuer was a young but experienced architect who challenged Gropius' position with his energy and self-confidence. His input into the partnership's work was extensive and assertive; works such as the Hagerty house of 1937 or the Chamberlain cottage of 1940 show Breuer's stylistic handwriting, visible particularly in the heavy stone elements and interiors. Recognising the incompatibility of their egos, Gropius and Breuer split up in 1941.

[65] "....[a house] built of timber on a site in Kent in which I had no part." (Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches*, p.150)

[66] See Cormier, *Gropius*, p.47

executed for Pritchard's Isokon firm. Gropius' work at Dartington also excludes Fry completely. Nevertheless, there are some projects which represent a true collaboration between the German and the English partner, most famously the project for Impington Village College [29]. One reason why this can be attributed with certainty to both architects is the fact that by March 1937, when Gropius left for the States, financial matters were as yet unsettled and Fry was left to finalise and supervise project and plans (see 3.a.ii.). At Impington, the move away from the harsh, angular forms of modernism (still prevalent for example in the Levy house design) - the loosely spread-out plan, the introduction of curves, the choice of material - have often been ascribed to an increased respect on Gropius' part to the British environment, its landscape and traditions, and thus to the influence of his English partner. However, Fry's role in this development should not be overestimated. In 1935 Fry had executed Little Winch at Chipperfield [87] in exposed timber and brick, and his experience there could be regarded as formative for the choice of a mixture of fair-faced brick and other natural materials at Impington. However, Fry's choice of material at Chipperfield had been involuntary, for the original design for the house had been in reinforced concrete; its brick and timber elevations were the result of pressure by the local planning authorities.[67] Fry's other work of the period, such as his house at Kingston of 1937, also does not indicate that at that time he had moved away from the geometric forms and concrete aesthetics of the early period of the modern movement. Gropius, on the other hand, as we have seen, was then moving towards a New Contextualism, both intellectually and in terms of design. His Wood House in Kent anticipates the interest in natural materials which at Impington is expressed in the use of brick, while the spread-eagled

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[67] See *The Architectural Review*, Vol. LXXIX, Jan. 1936, p.25

plan and other design features have clear precedents in his German work, notably the Bauhaus in Dessau. Most of the design as well as conceptual innovations should therefore be attributed to Gropius and not his English partner. Fry's role in this development probably lay less in the actual design decisions, but in the fact that he introduced and to a certain extent sensitised Gropius during the course of their partnership to his new working environment and its traditions.

However, Gropius' high input in the partnership's 'joint' projects needs to be balanced out against the fact that during their collaboration Fry also worked on projects in which Gropius had no part. For most of the time the architects worked alongside each other on separate projects, each with their own staff (a specification made by Gropius, who liked to hand-pick his draughtsmen[68]). While Gropius was working on his projects with Proskauer and others, Fry worked on the design and building supervision of his own commissions - some obtained before joining Gropius, others apparently during their partnership. One of the projects under the control of Fry, for example, was Lawn Road's intended successor, the 'Isokon 2' flats at West Tisbury in Manchester. Although an Isokon press release announced 'Isokon 2' as the first project of a collaboration between Fry and Gropius, it was Fry who was in charge of the designs. He executed the first plans in the summer of 1934, before Gropius' arrival in Britain

[68] Gropius had specified the introduction of a clause allowing him "six apprentices" in his contract with Isokon (see Cormier, *Gropius*, p.50), though he probably never had the full number while working in Fry's office. One likely reason for his careful choice of staff was that Gropius himself was an abominable draughtsman - his difficulty with drawing had been the main reason for his interrupting his studies before completion - whose working method was largely dependent on his draughtsmen's capacity to translate his ideas and verbal instructions onto paper. (See introduction to Nerdinger, *The Walter Gropius Archive*, Vol.1)

in October.[69] Fry's independent work while in partnership with Gropius was fairly extensive: 1934 saw the erection of his Sassoon House in Peckham and the house at Chipperfield; the Sun House in Hampstead and the Kensal House flats in West London can be dated 1935-6; and 1937 was the year of completion for his house at Kingston in Surrey, to name but the most important projects. In this light Cormier's observations that Fry occupied a merely "supporting role" in the partnership and that he was "steam-rollered within his own office"[70] need to be re-evaluated. Although it is true that when in direct collaboration Gropius dominated his British partner, much of the partnership was conducted on the basis of two independent architects running their own practices. Furthermore, Fry himself has stressed that collaboration was based on a "Prospero and Ariel" principle which suited both partners and from which Fry profited as much as Gropius. Additionally, Fry gained immensely in national and international standing through his association with Gropius and the fact that their names appeared together even for projects in which the English architect had little part. Isaacs' interpretation that the Gropius/Fry partnership was a "mutually rewarding one"[71] must therefore be seen to be closer to the truth than Cormier's conclusions.

Kaufmann's partnership with Frederick E. Towndrow, on the other hand, was characterised mainly by a complete lack of collaboration. Their original decision to become partners may have been based to a large extent on their shared

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[69] GN (BHA), 5/105 (Isokon press release) and 5/72-74 (letter Fry to Gropius, July 6th, 1934). Gropius in turn took charge of 'Isokon 3', the Windsor flats project, on the strength of which he had been granted a work permit. As it turned out, both projects fell through due to financial difficulties on the part of Pritchard.

[70] Cormier, *Gropius*, p.51

[71] Isaacs, *Gropius*, p.191

interest in low-cost housing and modern construction.[72] Towndrow's interest in construction is illustrated by his book *Architecture in the Balance* of 1933, a treatise on building materials, and the fact that *Architectural Design and Construction*, of which he was editor from 1933-43, assumed a strongly technical flavour under his control. During the early 1930s, Towndrow engaged in research into pre-fabrication and modern low-cost mass housing - the issues which had dominated the work of Kaufmann and other architects with May in Frankfurt - at a time when hardly any British architects were interested in these topics. Stylistically, too, Towndrow had begun to embrace a Continental modernist language several years earlier than most of his British colleagues: his house at Hockley, Essex, of 1930, for instance, is one of the earliest examples of the flat-roofed modernist architecture in Britain.[73] Perhaps surprisingly, though, Towndrow's editorial and journalistic work resulted in his keeping a relatively low architectural profile during the 1933-8 period of the dissemination of modernism in his country and of his partnership with Kaufmann.[74] In fact, the partnership existed more on paper than in reality: Towndrow and Kaufmann ran completely separate offices. From the onset, the émigré's work in shop design had ensured him a steady flow of commissions and thus independence from his partner. His independence was such that in his RIBA nomination papers of

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[72] Born 1897 in London into a family of craftsmen, Towndrow had studied architecture at University College London and had made his name as one of the chief architects of the British Empire exhibition at Wembley in 1923-4. For a summary of Towndrow's biographical details see his obituary in *The Times*, Aug 11th, 1977, or the announcement of his1943 appointment as 'Controller of Experimental Building Development of the Directorate of Post-War Building of MOW', in *The Architects' Journal*, July 8th, 1943.

[73] See Raymond McGrath, *Twentieth Century Houses* (London, 1934), p.25. The house has the air of a design by Adolf Loos.

[74] After ending his collaboration with Kaufmann, he partnered up with Geoffrey Ransom, with whom he produced designs oscillating between modernism and an Arts and Crafts Picturesque, suggesting a lack of commitment to the ideals of the new architecture. (Compare for example Towndrow and Ransom's house near Boxmoor, Hertfordshire, and two houses at Horley, Surrey, both published in *Architectural Design and Construction*, Aug. 1939, pp.306-7.) In 1947 Towndrow emigrated to Sydney, Australia, where he became Professor of Architecture at the University of New South Wales.

1941, rather than identifying the partnership, Kaufmann described his work of the past years in the following way: "1933-now [1941]: in private architectural practice as principal of my own firm in London."[75] His autonomy within his partnership arrangement left the émigré free to collaborate elsewhere.

Thus in 1934 Kaufmann teamed up with a young British architect, Elisabeth Benjamin, to execute a house at 55 Victoria Drive in Wimbledon [47], commissioned by the business partner of Benjamin's father. Within the Kaufmann/Benjamin collaboration, power relations were very unevenly distributed: the fact that Kaufmann was an experienced architect of international reputation while Benjamin was a recent graduate with little practical experience reinforced the German's dominant position. As a result, Benjamin did not experience their working together in an entirely positive way: "Kaufmann came to England from Russia and it was difficult for a young architect [like myself] to work with on my first job.... I am afraid I found him difficult to work with as he found me too young and too raw."[76] Kaufmann's dominance is also reflected in the design of the house; many of the characteristic elements can be ascribed to him. Benjamin confirms: "He was responsible for the cement rendered brickwork which was rather against my principles and also the rounded conservatory window which was, I think, a success."[77] That Benjamin's input into the design was minimal, and that this was potentially a missed opportunity, is illustrated by a comparison of the Wimbledon design with her main achievement of the period, a house at Gerrards Cross, which she designed in 1935-6 in collaboration with Godfrey Samuel. This house possesses a maturity and grandeur far removed

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[75] Kent RIBA Nomination Papers, Fellow, No.3847, Aug. 9th, 1941, RIBAA
[76] Elisabeth Nagelschmidt (née Benjamin), letter to the author, April 18th, 1998
[77] ibid.

from the almost fussy compactness of the house in Victoria Drive, although certain ideas used in the latter re-surface at Gerrards Cross. Thus the constant fusion of interior and exterior space through various glazing and framing devices which dominates the Benjamin/Samuel design could be seen as having its origin in the Wimbledon house. In any case, Benjamin has never quite felt the Wimbledon design to be her own, and as a result today is "not very proud of it."[78] However, she feels quietly assured and consoled by the fact that the Kaufmann house was eventually demolished, while the house at Gerrards Cross has been listed.

Unlike Kaufmann, Mendelsohn and Gropius, Marcel Breuer does not appear to have exerted the same kind of dominating influence over his partner. Instead, his partnership with F. R. S. Yorke seems to have worked much more on a basis of equality. The reason for this probably lay in the greater proximity of the architects' age and architectural experience, though artistically Breuer was more sophisticated than Yorke. Although Breuer was four years older than Yorke and was by then an experienced designer of furniture and interiors, he had only executed two buildings before his arrival in England. Similarly, Yorke's career as a practising architect had only begun properly in 1932, for most of his time since qualifying in 1929 had been taken up by travelling and writing. Having seen the new architecture in Italy, Germany and Czechoslovakia,[79] Yorke had become one of its youngest[80] and most ardent advocates in Britain, publicising his ideas

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[78] Lynne Walker, "Interview with Elisabeth Benjamin", in *The Modern House Revisited. The Journal of the 20th Century Society*, No.2, 1996, pp.75-84

[79] His main period of travel was between 1929, when he completed his studies at Birmingham School of Architecture, and 1932.

[80] He was born in 1906. For details on Yorke see Alan Powers, *In the Line of Development: FRS Yorke, E Rosenberg and CS Mardall to YRM, 1930-1992*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1992)

in articles he wrote for the *Architects' Journal* and the *Architectural Review* and in books. His 1934 book on *The Modern House* was, according to Fry, "a real eye-opener ... [which] gave us [British architects] a conspectus of the movement at the time we most needed it."[81] Yorke's special interest and knowledge in materials and techniques[82] provided a parallel to Marcel Breuer's expertise in materials and added to the architects' suitability as partners.

However, during their partnership, Breuer and Yorke worked alongside each other more than with each other; the amount of direct collaboration between the partners was even more limited than in the case of Gropius and Fry. As Alan Powers has pointed out, "Yorke and Breuer worked amicably together, but their works are separately attributable."[83] One reason for the lack of direct collaboration was the fact that during much of his time in Britain Breuer was busy executing furniture and interior design schemes in which Yorke had no part. Breuer had contracted himself to Pritchard's Isokon company in 1934 in order to be allowed to settle in Britain, and it was for Isokon that his famous design work of the period was executed, including his Long Chair [34b] and other plywood furniture. For Isokon, he also designed the Isobar at Lawn Road flats. (Breuer's independent design work during the partnership also included numerous other interiors. See 3.a.iii.) It is interesting to note here that because of his involvement with Isokon, and the network of personal connections in the furniture and design industries which resulted from this work, Breuer achieved a

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[81] Maxwell Fry, "F. R. S. Yorke 1906-1962, a memoir by E. Maxwell Fry", in *Architectural Review*, Vol. CXXXII, 1962, p.280, quoted in Powers, *In the Line of Development*, p.14. *The Modern House* was followed in 1937 by the publication of *The Modern House in England* and *The Modern Flat* (written with Gibberd).

[82] This was gained particularly during his work for the *Architects' Journal*, first as a technical editor writing on building materials, then as editor of the annual volume *Specification*.

[83] Powers, *In the Line of Development*, p.17

greater degree of independence from his partner in terms of acquiring commissions than most other German émigrés. Meanwhile, Yorke was also executing some work in which his émigré partner had no part. When Breuer joined the office in early 1935, Yorke was working on 'Torilla', a house at Nast Hyde in Hertfordshire, a flawless and much published exercise in concrete modernism. A few years later, Yorke re-used the plans of 'Torilla' in a house in Lee-on-Solent called 'Shangri-La'. Although 'Shangri-La' was executed in 1936-7, that is during the partnership, and published under the name of both partners, there is no doubt that the design was exclusively Yorke's brainchild. A third project executed by Yorke alone was a house at Iver of 1935-36.

Few projects can be attributed to a possible collaboration between Breuer and Yorke. The commission for the 'Garden City of the Future' for the Cement and Concrete Association of 1936 [40] was, according to Randall Evans, assistant in the joint practice since 1936, "a ninety percent Breuer,"[84] an attribution confirmed by the formal analysis in Chapter 3.a.iii. Evans has also attributed the design of 'Sea Lane House' at Angmering-on-Sea [39] to Breuer alone. Indeed, Breuer's intense involvement with the project is reflected in the abundance of features echoing the designs of the Harnischmacher House and the Doldertal flats [36], on which the Hungarian worked before coming to England. However, while plans in the later and final stages of development are identified as the joint work of Yorke and Breuer, the plans of the very first scheme carry the signature of Yorke alone.[85] Driller has further demonstrated that a number of design features at Angmering - in particular the fenestration - parallel elements at Yorke's 'Torilla', 'Shangri-La' and the house at Iver and are thus likely to have

[84] cited in ibid., p.18

been introduced by the English partner.[86] Moreover, it can be assumed that Yorke's involvement with 'Sea Lane House' was also required in dealings with the local planning authorities, whose repeated restrictions caused disagreements. These would have been far easier to handle for a native speaker familiar with planning legislation than for an émigré barely settled into the country. And a final argument against attributing the Angmering design to Breuer alone is that he never himself claimed the design.

Neither did Breuer take credit for the design of the master's houses at Eton [38]. Here, the émigré was responsible for the remodelling of a design by Yorke.[87] By simplifying the broken-up, additive plans and somewhat untidy elevations of Yorke's design, Breuer turned the Eton houses into compact and cohesive modern buildings with an elegant, almost classical air. At what point and by whom the decision to chose brick and wood as the construction materials was made is difficult to establish, for existing plans do not indicate intended materials. It may, however, be noted that Breuer, up to this point, had never used a traditional material for a modernist design, whereas his partner Yorke was undergoing a drastic change in his attitude to modernism and materials at the time. Abandoning the use of concrete which was characteristic of British architectural modernism in the early 1930s, in his 1937 publication *The Modern House in England* Yorke introduced modern buildings in a variety of materials, including brick, wood and stone. The same year, he and his draftsman Randall

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[85] See RIBADC RAN 20/J/7-8

[86] See Joachim Driller, *Marcel Breuer - das architektonische Frühwerk bis 1950*, PhD Dissertation (Freiburg, 1990), pp.118-9

[87] Here, too, early versions of the plans are signed by Yorke (RIBADC RAN 20/J/1), while the revised plans carry the names of both architects (RAN 20/J/2-3).

Evans allegedly made the New Year resolution to build "no more concrete houses."[88]

For both architects the Gane Pavilion [42] marked a turning point in their attitude towards the inclusion of traditional materials in the modernist canon. Despite the fact that Yorke had considerable experience with traditional construction methods, and despite Evans' claims that the stone walls of the Gane Pavilion were inspired by Yorke's own house,[89] it is Breuer who should be credited with its design. Apart from the difficulty of imagining a work of such distinct vision and innovative quality to have been produced by the less than visionary Yorke, Breuer's theoretical engagement with the question of materials and tradition at the time was more intense than Yorke's.[90] Furthermore, Breuer's work up to that point, more directly than Yorke's, had been inspired at each turn by the work of Le Corbusier; and the rough stone walls and curves of the Gane Pavilion most certainly suggest a Corbusian influence (see 3.a.iii).

It is interesting to observe how Breuer's and Yorke's design ideas developed along roughly parallel lines during their association and immediately after. In accord with the general trends in modernist design of the period, they both moved away from the functionalist aesthetics of concrete towards a fusion of modernist forms with traditional materials, construction and vernacular idioms. Thus Yorke's seven cottages for brewery workers at Stratford of 1939 [88], executed in brick, timber and Cotswold stone, fused references to local vernacular traditions with modernist forms in much the same way as Breuer's

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[88] According to Randall Evans' recollections. (Evans joined the Breuer/Yorke office in 1936 from New Zealand.) Cited in Powers, *In the Line of Development*, p.18.
[89] quoted in Driller, *Marcel Breuer* (diss.), p.367

American buildings of the same period. This parallel development suggests that their partnership provided a platform for the exchange of architectural ideas and concepts, while still allowing space for each partner's individual style.

Yorke presumably felt fairly positive about his experiences in his partnership with Breuer, for after the Hungarian had followed Gropius to Harvard, Yorke agreed to a collaboration with Arthur Korn. Korn, also an émigré from Germany, had been lodging with the Yorkes for some time. Before embarking on their joint work, Yorke had warned Korn that "...when Marcel Breuer left, he didn't take any money out; he had to pay something in"[91] - something which illustrates the fact that not all partnerships were necessarily commercially successful enterprises. The building which resulted from the partnership, a block of eight flats at Lettsom Street in Camberwell, completed in 1939 [89], demonstrates how completely Yorke had distanced himself from the concrete aesthetic of his early designs during his association with Breuer. The Lettsom Street flats are remarkable for their successful and - at least in an English context - original design, characterised by their exposed building structure, an articulated reinforced concrete frame combined with facing brick infill. As Powers has pointed out, "a year or two before, this construction would probably have been masked behind a coat of render, but the expression of the frame is perhaps jointly attributable to Korn's interest in structural clarity and Yorke's new-found enthusiasm for variety."[92] While the use of brick may indeed have been suggested by Yorke, the overall design concept can with great certainty be attributed to Korn. The exposed frame with visible, contrasting filling was

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[90] As illustrated for example in his essay on the question in the publication *Circle*. See 3.a.iii.
[91] Arthur Korn, "55 Years in the Modern Movement", in *Arena*, April 1966, pp.263-5
[92] Powers, , *In the Line of Development*, p.21

something found with frequency in Korn's work, both after and prior to his collaboration with Yorke. Thus the playful contrast of materials and textures and the grid pattern created by the articulation of the structural frame had appeared for instance in his 1931 design for the Fromm rubber factory in Berlin-Köpenick [90].[93] While in the latter, the black frame contrasts with light-coloured brick, at Lettsom Street the grey of the rough exposed concrete is offset by the reddish-brown bricks. On the street façade, only the horizontal and the outer beams of the framework are exposed, giving both a clear structure and horizontal emphasis to the elevations. The calm, unified appearance of the façades is underlined by its flush surface - there are no protruding members - and the rational, symmetrical distribution of windows. The success of the Lettsom Street design makes one regret the fact that this was the only fruit of Yorke and Korn's collaboration. (Interestingly, however, the frank and pronounced articulation of the structural frame on the outside of a building was to become an important characteristic of the work by the post-war partnership of Yorke Rosenberg & Mardall.) Korn left Yorke in 1938 in order to join Maxwell Fry, with whom he collaborated on "the last significant contribution made by the M.A.R.S. group, the hypothetical plan of London"[94] [15] until the émigré's internment in 1939.

In the light of these observations it can be said with some certainty that, apart from one or two exceptions, wherever the German émigrés joined up with a British architect, they left a strong mark on the work of the partnership. In most cases this influence came in the form of fresh ideas on modernist design and construction. Owing to their first-hand exposure to and often participation in the

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[93] See *Bauwelt*, No.22, 1931, p.493
[94] Fry, *Autobiographical Sketches*, p.160

development of modern architecture on the Continent, the Germans had much to offer in this respect, even to British partners who were already practising in a modern idiom. A Continental modern influence is especially striking in partnerships in which the British partner practised predominantly in a traditional idiom. Thus in his partnership with Young, Engel introduced Moderate Modern elements from his German work into the existing practice's style, fusing neo-Georgian and other traditionalist British architecture with watered-down elements of *Neues Bauen,* to the extent that this hybrid style almost became a trademark of the joint practice's work (see 3.b.iii.). In all Anglo-German partnerships one partner (and often both) had to adapt to the other to a certain degree - unless, as in the case of Kaufmann and Towndrow, no real actual collaboration between the architects took place. In most cases, the partner who adapted more strongly was the partner with a lesser degree of experience and reputation. Significantly, in the partnerships committed to modernism it was the British partners who tended to adapt to the Germans, while in traditionally-oriented partnerships, such as Jaretzki's or Engel's, it was the Germans who adapted to the British architects. The above discussion demonstrates that a process of assimilation of the partners' ideas and knowledge took place, although in varying degrees, in the majority of Anglo-German partnerships. This represented the coming together not only of two different personalities, but also of two different cultures which, through the partnerships, were given the chance for direct cross-influence. It is through this exchange that elements which originated in one culture could be absorbed and developed in another.

## 4.b. *Continental Impact*: The Influence of German Émigrés on British Architecture

The main objective of the preceding chapters, particularly Chapters 3.a. and 3.b., has been to demonstrate that German émigré architects in Britain were far from unresponsive to their new working environment, and to show that the British environment exerted its influence on each of the émigrés, prompting them to re-think their architectural conceptions and adjust their architectural design (in varying degrees and ways) to conditions and traditions in Britain. The question which remains is whether this cross-cultural exchange also worked the other way: whether the architectural ideas introduced by the Germans had a comparable impact on British architectural culture. This chapter will assess how strong an influence the work of German architects had on British architecture, over and above their influence on their British partners in joint practice. Looking at both the pre- and post-war periods, the chapter will assess the Germans' overall importance within the development of modernism in Britain, comparing their influence with that of émigré architects of other nationalities and other, non-German influences from the Continent. What emerges from the discussion is that in many areas German architects contributed to changes in British architectural design and conception. Nevertheless, their achievements have to be viewed against those of other foreign architects in Britain at the time, as well as those of British architects.

The discussion of the impact of the work of German architects in Britain essentially concerns modernism and architectural reform. Those émigrés who conformed to existing British building traditions were largely absorbed into the

mainstream of British architecture without visibly influencing its course. It is only in terms of innovation and contribution to change that any long-lasting impact can be measured. As we have seen in Chapter 2.a., it would be wrong to credit the émigrés with the actual introduction of architectural modernism in Britain; by the time that the majority of German architects arrived the British modern movement had already gained its own momentum. Here, it is important to distinguish between the influence of German architecture and theory on British modernism *before* the arrival of the German émigrés, and the influence which they actually exerted through their presence and work in the country. As regards the former, Germany naturally occupied an important role; it is well established that German developments, after French ones, were the most important inspiration for the British modern movement. Contemporary literature[1] and exhibitions introduced Britain to German avant-garde developments. Particularly influential were the 1928 'Modern German Architecture' exhibition[2] and the 1930 exhibition of Erich Mendelsohn's work,[3] both at London's Architectural Association, as well as the 1934 exhibition of Gropius' work at the RIBA.[4] The stark white walls and cubic forms of *Neues Bauen* became an important source of inspiration for the establishment of the International Style in Britain, and some pioneering British buildings were clearly modelled on German prototypes. For example, the continuous access balconies and cubic balcony recesses in Wells

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[1] This is reflected in the literature of the time: the coverage of German architecture in contemporary British publications increased drastically from the mid-1920s onwards (see 2.a.). The first article on Gropius' work had been published as early as 1924 in *The Architectural Review*.

[2] See the German translation of an article by Atkinson in *Wasmuth's Monatshefte*, Vol.XII, 1928, pp.340ff. The exhibition offered an overview of contemporary German developments of the last two decades which, rather than over-emphasising the work of individual high-profile avant-garde architects, included traditionalist designs and less well-known names. Interestingly, it included the work of Rudolf Fränkel and Walter Landauer, two architects who later emigrated to Britain.

[3] This small exhibition was put on for the event of Mendelsohn giving a lecture at the AA.

Coates' Lawn Road flats (1932-34) or Embassy Court flats of 1934 [91] and Maxwell Fry's Sassoon House (1933-34), appear to point to Gropius' Siemensstadt flats in Berlin [92],[5] while the advanced construction methods and curtain wall glazing in Owen Williams's Boots factory (1930-32) may have been inspired by Gropius' work at Alfeld, Cologne and Dessau.[6] And the sweeping curve, regular façade rhythm and frank articulation of structure in Slater and Moberley's Peter Jones store in Sloane Square (1932-36) were clearly inspired by Mendelsohn's Chemnitz Schocken store and other work.[7]

However, it may be wrong to over-emphasise the importance of German sources in the early phase of British modernism, for a closer look at the buildings of the period reveals an even stronger orientation towards French prototypes. In particular, the work of Le Corbusier[8] had a profound influence on the work of modernists in Britain during the pioneering phase.[9] The prominence of Le Corbusier, which continued throughout the 1930s, can be explained largely by the publication of the immensely popular English translation of his *Vers une architecture* in 1927. By contrast, there was no comparably comprehensive and

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[4] The exhibition was opened in May 1934, that is five months before Gropius' emigration to London. Gropius was present at the opening, where he gave a lecture.

[5] However, it is possible that these English flat schemes were also informed by Soviet prototypes of collective housing.

[6] I am referring to Gropius' and Meyer's Fagus boot-last factory in Alfeld-an-der-Leine of 1911, his exhibition building for the 1914 Werkbund exhibition in Cologne and his 1925 Bauhaus building in Dessau, all of which make extensive use of steel and glass construction and curtain walling.

[7] The Mendelsohnian connection here is also underlined by a suspended metal spiral staircase in the entrance area of the store. Significantly, the consulting architects of the London store were Crabtree and Reilly, the latter head of the Liverpool School and a great admirer of Mendelsohn, who spoke at his school in 1933 (See C. H. Reilly, *Scaffolding in the Sky* (London, 1938).)

[8] I am using the name of Le Corbusier as a leader of French modernism because, despite his being of Swiss nationality, he worked mostly in France, where his most important works of the period can be found.

[9] The visual influence of Corbusian models is especially visible British of the 1930s, such as George Checkley's in Cambridge or Amyas Connell's in Amersham, whose *piloti*, strip windows,

influential text by a German architect published in English until Gropius' *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* in 1935.[10] Thus, as Hitchcock has observed, "the German influence ... was less clear-cut and less pure than that which entered England with the writings of Le Corbusier."[11] The importance of French sources can also be traced in the decorative tendencies which came to dominate whole sections of British design, such as entertainment architecture, after the 1925 Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs (see 2.a.). Writing in 1930, Morton Shand confirms but regrets the supremacy of a French influence on British taste: "In [British] Modernist design, a Teutonic corrective is more than ever necessary to offset Latin exuberance."[12] And yet, as we shall see below, despite the influx of German émigré architects after 1933, which partially redressed the balance in the way desired by Shand, modernists in Britain seemingly never ceased to be more inspired by French models than by German ones. Moreover, in addition to French and German prototypes, Britain also drew inspiration from other European sources in its modern movement. Russian developments were admired (though less imitated), as was Scandinavian modernism, which featured regularly in contemporary British publications, particularly after the 1930 Stockholm exhibition. Swedish architecture, in particular, had a significant influence on British architects in the late 1920s and

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roof gardens, ramp-like staircases, nautical and aeronautical references are in many cases taken directly from Le Corbusier's villas of the 1920s.

[10] Mendelsohn's *Structures and Sketches* was published in England in 1925, and his *New House - New World* in 1932, but neither had much impact. This was probably because these books did not provide a broad, visionary architectural guideline, but merely celebrated Mendelsohn's individual genius (in the latter concentrating only on one building, the architects own house at Rupenhorn).

[11] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *Modern Architecture in England* (New York, 1937), p.29

[12] P Morton Shand, "The Myth of French Taste", in *Architectural Review*, no.408, Nov.1930, pp.225-8. Shand later translated Gropius' *New Architecture and the Bauhaus* into English.

early 1930s, as evident in many of the British entries for the Bexhill Pavilion.[13] Finally, the impact of Dutch modernism on British architecture must also not be underestimated.[14] The simple geometric forms and additive arrangement typical of Dudok's work, for instance, inspired a variety of British architects, including Burnet, Tait and Lorne, Charles Holden, and the architects of the pithead baths for the Miners' Welfare Committee. In other words, when looking at the British modern movement, to concentrate on German contributions alone would be doing great injustice to the variety of influences which were absorbed in Britain at the time.

When examining the influence of German émigrés on British architecture from 1933 onwards, two types of response are evident: increased interest in the émigré's *German* work, inspired by their presence in Britain, on the one hand, and a more direct response to their contemporary *British* work on the other. The one German architect to have exerted a strong impact on British architecture through both his past and British work was Erich Mendelsohn (perhaps surprisingly, given that he only fully committed himself to Britain for less than two years). Arriving in Britain in 1933, Mendelsohn was preceded by his reputation,[15] which he fostered and intensified during his stay; he preferred self-promotion through the spoken word, disseminating his ideas through lectures and visiting important architectural institutions rather than writings. Thus in 1930, he had lectured at the Architectural Association, in 1933 he spoke at the Liverpool

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[13] See Russell Stevens & Peter Willis, "Earl De La Warr and the Competition for the Bexhill Pavilion", in *Architectural History*, Vol.33, 1990, p.135. Fry's design, for example, seems influenced by the Swedish architect Markelius.

[14] Britain was familiarised with the developments in Holland through publications such as Yerbury's *Modern Dutch Buildings* of 1931.

[15] Established through the 1930 AA exhibition and publications of his work in English language sources, including the 1925 book *Structures and Sketches* and numerous articles in

School of Architecture, and his lecture 'Rebuilding the World' was delivered in London in 1937 and in Edinburgh in 1938.

The dynamism and creative energy of Mendelsohn's approach[16] deeply impressed not only hundreds of architectural students, but also a number of practising British architects, who were thus inspired to take a fresh look at his German work. Such an influence is evident for instance in Joseph Emberton's Simpson's store in Piccadilly (1935-36), which is clearly modelled on Mendelsohn's Herpich Fur store in Berlin,[17] or in the Blackpool Casino (1937-38), whose sweeping curves and recessed upper storey echo the dynamic design of the Universum Cinema in Berlin [17b]. In fact, their creative use of brick made Mendelsohnian models (such as the residential blocks of the Woga Complex) particularly attractive for the Moderate Modern strand of 1930s British architecture. Thus numerous British buildings of the period, especially urban flat schemes, began to make free use of Mendelsohnian elements, including curved balconies, semi-circular bay windows and a banded effect achieved by alternating dark brickwork and white stringcourses.[18]

While working in Britain, Mendelsohn only realised three buildings; however these had a visible influence on British modernism of the 1930s. The Bexhill Pavilion [16], in particular, made a significant impact on British architecture. As a

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architectural magazines, such as Chermayeff's 'Film Shots in Germany' (see *Architectural Review*, Nov. 1931, pp.131ff.).

[16] Mendelsohn is known, for example, to have illustrated his talks with free architectural sketches on a blackboard, which left a deep impression on his audience.

[17] It may be noted that the Herpich store, as well as a similar design for a Berlin store by the architects Luckhardt and Anker, featured in the 1928 AA exhibition 'Modern German Architecture'.

[18] For examples see chapter 3.b.ii. Interestingly, other German émigrés reinforced the impact of Mendelsohn's influence on British architecture by designing buildings in Britain which showed

competition winner and prominent public building, the Pavilion received much attention from the media and architectural press, and thus put the émigré in the spotlight of public and profession from the onset. And because it was executed during the initial period of the spread of modernism in Britain, the Pavilion, judged by Henry-Russell Hitchcock as "the most conspicuous and successful modern building in England",[19] achieved an almost manifesto-like status in British modernism. In particular its profound effect on the development of British seaside architecture cannot be denied in the view of buildings such as R.W.H. Jones's Saltdean Lido of 1938 [93, compare with 16a].[20] In domestic architecture, too, Mendelsohn's British designs exerted an influence. Thus stylistic elements from the De La Warr Pavilion as well as his houses at Chelsea and Chalfont St. Giles - the characteristic low, horizontal proportions, strip windows and glazed semicircular bays - re-appeared in many modernist houses in Britain, such as Maxwell Fry's Kingston house (1937) or Christopher Nicholson's 'Kits Close' (1936). Overall, it can be said that Mendelsohn's influence on British architecture, although important, occurred mainly on a visual-aesthetic level. It was his powerful aesthetic language which inspired British architects, rather than his ideas on the function and concept of architecture.

In this respect, Mendelsohn was very much the opposite of Gropius. For although Gropius' buildings in Britain found an occasional imitator, they did not provide as coherent and inspiring a visual vocabulary as did Mendelsohn's.

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strong traces of his work. This is particularly obvious in Freud's Belvedere Court and Jelinek-Karl's Rosehill Court (see previous chapters).

[19] Henry-Russell Hitchcock, "An American Critic in England", in *Architect and Building News*, Jan. 15th, 1937, p.67

While Mendelsohn consistently provided the British with the International Style designs they appear to have expected of a renowned German modernist at the time, each of Gropius' British designs employs a different aesthetic vocabulary, as is particularly evident in the wide range of materials used. Moreover, Gropius never succeeded in creating a British landmark that equalled the Bexhill Pavilion in architectural importance. Had the Windsor project been executed, this might have done so; as it was, the most influential building in Gropius' British oeuvre was Impington Village College, which was completed at too late a stage before the war to have had a comparably strong impact on inter-war architecture in Britain. Gropius' importance for the development of British architecture thus lies less on a visual-aesthetic level than on an intellectual-theoretical one. To start with, Gropius' mere presence in Britain served to encourage those who sought to develop a native modernist tradition. His partnership with Fry and his participation in the MARS group put him in the very centre of the British architectural avant-garde, who could thus profit from his experience, ideas and organisational skills. (In this respect, too, he differentiates himself from Mendelsohn, who never participated in MARS or any other group activities.) Between 1934 and 1936, Gropius' intellectual influence on the English-speaking world was consolidated through publications such as Read's *Art and Industry*, Pevsner's *Pioneers of Modern Design from William Morris to Walter Gropius* and, most importantly, his own book on *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus* of 1935, which became an inspiration for the new generation of British architects. For many of them, such as Philip Powell, *The New Architecture and*

[20] Emberton's Blackpool Casino also borrows heavily from the Bexhill Pavilion, as seen most strikingly in the spiral staircase enclosed in a glass bay.

*the Bauhaus* "marked ... the 'discovery' of modern architecture."[21] Ensuring that his name was regarded as synonymous with the Bauhaus and everything it stood for,[22] Gropius thus exerted more influence in Britain through his ideas and theories than his executed work.

However, Gropius' intellectual influence on the younger generation of British architects meant that much of his impact on British architecture would only become evident after the war. Whereas Mendelsohn's work had an immediate but short-term effect on British inter-war architecture, Gropius' influence was less direct but longer-lasting. Many of the enthusiastic students who had been reading Gropius' writings in the 1930s, had been impressed with the social ideas he put forward: "...we welcomed [the Bauhaus's] earnest concentration on social issues, expressed notably in its work on low-cost public housing."[23] What they saw in the Bauhaus (which for most people was synonymous with Gropius) served as an inspiration when they came to transform their own social-reforming ideas into architecture in the post-war era. Thus Powell has "little doubt" that he and his partner Moya "were influenced by the Bauhaus, especially in our first main work, the early post-war Churchill Gardens flats and houses in Pimlico."[24] (The influence of German town-planning concepts on post-war British social housing will be discussed further below.) The one field in which Gropius actually

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[21] Philip Powell, quoted in Brian Hanson, "The Gropius Family Tree", in *Royal Academy Journal*, No.8, Autumn, 1985, pp.37-8

[22] His *New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, for instance, is written as a purely personal account in which the Bauhaus emerges as the brainchild and work of Gropius alone. When in the USA he manipulated public opinion even further in this direction, he was bitterly criticised by other leading Bauhaus figures, such as Mies van der Rohe and Hilbersheimer.

[23] P. Powell, quoted in B. Hanson, "The Gropius Family...", p.39. However, as regards *The New Architecture and the Bauhaus*, a concentration on social aspects must have been the result of a rather selective reading, for Gropius had let the issue disappear into the background of the text as much as possible, in order to avoid making politicised statements of any sort. The idea of a social function of architecture appeared merely in implicit form in the discussion of cost and efficiency in housing.

underpinned his theoretical proposals with a built example in Britain was educational architecture. Thus, despite the fact that it was not a wholly original scheme (see 3.a.ii.), the programmatic and aesthetic ideas expressed in *Impington Village College had a lasting impact on British school building from* the 1940s onwards; the sprawling plan, in which each interior function finds its frank expression on the outside, re-appeared in Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall's secondary school at Stevenage (1950) [94, compare with 29a] and many other post-war educational buildings.

But it would be wrong to say that Gropius' British work had no visual impact on contemporary inter-war developments. What he probably deserves most credit for in this context is helping the visual language of British modernism to develop by moving away from the canonical International Style towards the exploration of a wide variety of materials, including timber and indigenous brick and stone, thus introducing some of the broader international tendencies in the modern movement at the time. Although, as we have seen, he was not the first architect in Britain to do so - and the question remains whether Gropius was not more influenced by British conditions and developments than vice versa - the fact that he, as one of the most authoritative and admired modernists at the time, turned to a New Contextualism must have seemed like an endorsement to British modernists who had felt the urge to adapt the International Style to the conditions of their own country. Thus it is probably no coincidence that the number of timber-framed modernist houses in Britain increased considerably after the erection of Gropius' Wood House in Kent.[25]

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[24] P. Powell, ibid.

[25] However, the translation of modernist forms into timber had been accomplished previously by Anthony Chitty in his cottages at Churt (1935-6) and by Serge Chermayeff at Bentley Wood

Breuer's architectural influence[26] on Britain can be described in very similar terms; he, too, created prototypes in England which expanded on the limited formula of International Style modernism, and thus contributed to the loosening of form and aesthetics described by Gould in terms of the 'Third Movement' of British modernism.[27] In his Eton houses he replaced the obligatory flat roof with a mono-pitched roof, a feature which became fashionable in British modernism from around 1936.[28] Breuer's Gane Pavilion in Bristol should also be regarded as a milestone in the new direction of modernism, although its powerful visual language does not seem to have had as strong an impact on Britain as it deserved, perhaps because it was demolished soon after the exhibition. However, buildings such as Denis Clarke Hall's 1939 Caretaker's Cottage in Richmond, Yorkshire [43, compare with 42], show that Breuer's Gane Pavilion did not go unnoticed. Perhaps Breuer, more than Gropius, should be credited with the introduction of the latest trends from the Continent into Britain, particularly of Corbusian ideas, such as the rough rubble wall and the building raised above ground on *piloti*.[29] Thus the separate long bedroom wing on stilts

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(designed in 1935, but built two years later). Gropius' assistant, Albrecht Proskauer, together with Bernard Le Mare, had also designed a timber-framed house with mono-pitched roof at Woodford in 1936, but Gropius' Wood House (executed to a large part by Proskauer) received much broader coverage in contemporary publications. For examples of later British modernist houses in timber see later editions of F. R. S. Yorke, *The Modern House in England* (London, 1937) or Jeremy Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain, 1919-1939* (London, 1977).

[26] Breuer's most important influence in Britain was perhaps in furniture design more than architecture. Items he designed for Isokon have become icons of modern British design.

[27] See Gould, *Modern Houses in Britain*

[28] Although Breuer was not the first architect to use a mono-pitched roof, his Eton houses inspired several British architects, including his partner Yorke (see 3.a.ii. & 4.a.). Later mono-pitched roofs can also be found Connell, Ward and Lucas's Potcroft at Sutton (1938), Justin Blanco White's Shawms at Cambridge (1938) and Frederick MacManus's house at Harrow Weald (1940), but since these often appear in conjunction with timber elevations, they may be inspired more by Gropius' Wood House.

[29] Breuer was not the first to use pilotis in Britain: Harding and Tecton's Six Pillars in Hampstead (1934), Wells Coates's Shipwright in Hadleigh (1936) and Maxwell Fry's Sun House in Hampstead (1935-6) all make use of thin pilotis. However, Breuer seems to have

proposed in 'Sea Lane House' re-appeared in Patrick Gwynne's 'The Homewood' in Esher (1937-38), a building also clearly inspired by Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye. In fact, the proximity of Breuer's work to Le Corbusier's ideas sometimes makes it difficult to tell whether later buildings using a similar vocabulary were inspired by one architect or the other.

However, Breuer's impact on British architecture was as short-lived as his stay in the country. Unlike Gropius, he left no written legacy which consolidated his impact on British architecture after the war. Both Breuer and Gropius incubated seeds of new architectural ideas during their stay in Britain, but instead of sowing them into hard and resistant British soil, they took them to America. Here, the soil was richer, growth faster and the harvest more abundant. But Gropius and Breuer's success in America owed a great deal to the fact that their experiences in Britain had sensitised them and made them aware of the necessity of adapting modern architecture to its context, to its surrounding conditions and, to a certain extent, local traditions. It was in Britain that they developed the basic design formulas which were adopted so successfully (by themselves, their admirers and pupils) in America.[30] It remains to be asked: what would have happened if Gropius and Breuer had stayed in Britain for longer? What would have happened, for instance, if Gropius had taken the post he had been offered at Liverpool School of Architecture (a post which he rejected because "his instincts were keyed too much to practical building" and

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been the first in Britain to use the thicker, heavier stilts which Le Corbusier was developing a the time.

[30] Thus the many American private houses built by the Gropius/Breuer partnership, in which International Style forms appear in combination with rough rubble walls of native stone, have their origins in Breuer's Gane Pavilion. And the formula of the spread-out, articulated plan which Gropius used so successfully for educational architecture in his American practice had been tested in Impington Village College.

because he was "still having a hard time with the language"[31])? His presence as a teacher at one of the most influential schools of architecture in Britain would undoubtedly have affected the course of British architecture, particularly in the face of the appetite for change which dominated the architectural scene in post-war Britain and made young architects receptive to reformist ideas. Alternatively, had Gropius been more patient with his situation in Britain, would he have been able to develop a practice as successful as his American venture? Certainly his practice in Britain would have developed in a different direction from his American work. In a bombed Britain suffering from a housing shortage and ruled by a Labour government there would almost certainly have been greater opportunities regarding social housing than there were in the United States,[32] and it is possible that post-war Britain would have been able to offer Gropius the chance to realise those large-scale town-planning projects which he had envisaged building for many years and continued to develop throughout his life. If Breuer had stayed in Britain, would he "have developed a great practice within three years", as Jack Pritchard believed?[33] Given the great success of individualistic modernists such as Denys Lasdun in post-war Britain, it is not unlikely that Breuer could have developed "a great practice", if not in three years, then certainly after the war. The fact remains, however, that Britain did not provide the instant reward which these architects were looking for. Too close to mainland Europe and too involved in the European war, during the 1940s

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[31] Letter Gropius to Martin Wagner, Dec. 12th, 1935, GN (BHA) 7/508)

[32] Significantly, Gropius' most important and largest town-planning scheme executed after he left Britain was in Germany, a massive *Siedlung* at Britz-Buckow-Rudow in Berlin (1960-73), later known as *Gropiusstadt*. Throughout his working life in the United States Gropius continued to work on extensive town-planning schemes, some as Harvard projects, others as competition entries, but most of the larger schemes which he and TAC built were of commercial-administrative or educational nature.

[33] Quoted in C. Benton, *A Different World* (London, 1995), p.65

Britain could not have offered Gropius, Breuer or Mendelsohn the opportunities for commissions they found in the States.

Britain had always been slow to adapt to new ideas in architecture, but it also had a history of holding onto them determinedly once it had accepted them. For this, British slowness in replacing Gothic with Classical forms in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the subsequent popularity and persistence of Palladian architecture throughout the eighteenth century, are good examples. With modernism, the story was not dissimilar. Architects who persisted throughout the period of inter-war scepticism and war-induced hardship were often rewarded with an abundance of commissions when modernism was widely adopted as the architecture of the welfare state in Britain. The most interesting examples for this, and at the same time the most valuable comparisons to Gropius and Mendelsohn, are the modernists Berthold Lubetkin and Ernö Goldfinger. The Russian Lubetkin and the Hungarian Goldfinger both came to Britain after having worked in France until around 1930. Unlike any of the German émigré architects, both Lubetkin and Goldfinger became inextricably linked with the history of modern British architecture. And unlike the work of the Germans (with the exception, perhaps, of the Bexhill Pavilion), the work of Lubetkin (and his firm Tecton) and Goldfinger cannot be extracted from British modernism without leaving a void. While the names of most of the Germans, apart from the very youngest, remained firmly associated with their work in Germany throughout their time in Britain and indeed until the present day, Lubetkin and Goldfinger have become almost synonymous with modernism in Britain. They exerted that influence on British architecture which none of the

Germans achieved, but might have done so had they shown more persistence with the situation.

Thus Lubetkin not only created seminal buildings of the early phase of modernism in Britain, but with buildings such as Highpoint II and the Finsbury Health Centre he also developed a new visual language for modernism which, because apparently more tailored to the British context, was widely adopted in Britain. In particular the new diversity of materials and the return to a more decorative treatment of form and surface pioneered by Lubetkin proved a successful formula for several decades of modern British design. This success is epitomised in the Royal Festival Hall, designed by Leslie Martin and others for the Festival of Britain in 1951, whose hooded roof and tiled side elevation details are clearly inspired by a Tectonian vocabulary. Lubetkin's ideas were further disseminated through his many collaborators in Tecton, amongst them the German Peter Moro, whose own work displayed much stronger influences from Lubetkin than from German architecture (see 3.b.iv.). The example of Lubetkin also demonstrates the extent to which post-war Britain represented a fertile ground for the realisation of modern housing projects on a larger scale: between 1945 and 1965 he supervised the design and construction of at least eight modern inner-city estates.[34] Post-war receptiveness to modernism also formed the basis for the success of Goldfinger, whose patience during the difficult 1930s and 1940s was rewarded with numerous large-scale commercial and residential commissions. Goldfinger's post-war work developed in a different, harsher direction from Lubetkin's, and as such serves as a demonstration of the

[34] Spa Green, Priory Green, Holford Square in Finsbury and Hallfield in Paddington were all executed with Tecton; Dorset, Lakeview and Cranbrook Estates in Bethnal Green followed after 1950 in partnership with Bailey and Skinner.

extent to which Britain was prepared to accept and realise radical architectural ideas during the period - a situation which could have worked in favour of Gropius and other Germans had they stayed. Although less successful than Lubetkin before the war, Goldfinger nevertheless contributed to the introduction of new materials and individualist forms into British modernism, and - with designs such as his Willow Road residence - added to that Tectonian vocabulary which proved so influential in Britain. Thus even Maxwell Fry, who had worked in partnership with Gropius, eventually found more inspiration from such sources than in the work of the Germans who had left Britain: his Girls' Hostel in Gower Street (1940) features prominent box frames in concrete around the windows, a feature of Goldfinger's Willow Road houses, while the tiling and variety of materials is characteristic of Tecton's late work.[35]

Interestingly, despite the individualism of their design approach, both Lubetkin's and Goldfinger's British work stood firmly in the French tradition of modernism, showing clearly detectable influences of Perret and Le Corbusier. In particular Lubetkin's success during the pre-war period in Britain could therefore be interpreted as another victory of French models over German ones, further evidence of the British preference for a French idiom. Throughout four decades, Le Corbusier remained the most powerful influence on British modernism. He captured British architects on many levels: his "early houses [went] straightway to [their] heart",[36] the "lyrical buoyancy" and "poetry"[37] of his writings invaded

[35] The influence of Gropius may still be detected in the roof terrace with curved metal curtain rails; tiles were used at Gropius and Fry's Impington Village College.
[36] Maxwell Fry, in „Le Corbusier - his impact on four generations", in *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, Oct. 1965, pp.497-500, p.497.
[37] Anthony Cox, in ibid., p.498

their senses, and "the glow of his intelligence"[38] appealed to their reason. The dominance of Le Corbusier, and the preference for French models contributed to the formation of stereotypes in British perceptions of the German and the French approach to modern architecture. To the British, German modernism, epitomised in Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, always had the flavour of joyless rationalism and fervent regimentation, of the functional, machine-oriented approach of *Zeilenbau* and prefabrication. This perception changed little over the decades. During Gropius', Breuer's and Mendelsohn's presence in Britain, the British got a brief glimpse of the fact that the Germans, too, could build in materials other than concrete, glass and steel and create designs which used forms other than the straight line and the right angle. But no sooner had they left for the USA, than this impression seemed to be forgotten. Old stereotypes re-asserted themselves, and any sense that these architects had moved on and developed their ideas got lost. In this way, an image of inflexibility and out-of-dateness attached itself to the German modernists. And although such prejudices are only partially justified (see 2.b.),[39] they proved enduring.

Not so with Le Corbusier: he continued to exert a strong influence on several generations of British architects, who kept up with every new development in his ideas.[40] Whereas the Germans' ideas were (unjustly) seen as static, his appeared to change continuously and thus seemed more relevant to contemporary problems. Additionally, many of his proposals appeared better

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[38] Fry, ibid., p.497

[39] Although Gropius, for instance, took longer than other émigrés to understand the necessity of adapting his designs to the British context, he nevertheless did so in the end, as his Wood House and Impington College testify.

[40] For an analysis of this see Adrian Forty, "Le Corbusier's British reputation", in Arts Council (eds.), *Le Corbusier: Architect of the Century*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1987), and the account of four British architects in "Le Corbusier - his impact..."

suited to the British context. His town-planning ideas (unlike *Zeilenbau*) seemed vaguely compatible with the traditions of the Garden City, while his more artistic approach (as opposed to the rational-scientific German approach) to design contained elements of both classical and picturesque traditions which appealed to British tastes. The irregular spacing, setbacks and mixed development of Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine (1922) and St. Dié reconstruction scheme (1946) appeared to echo faintly garden city ideas. Significantly, the fact that many German *Siedlungen*, especially those at Frankfurt, more picturesque and small-scale in lay-out, were much more directly derived from English garden city traditions, seems to have slipped British attention.

One particular area in which the influence of Le Corbusier and that of the German émigrés stood in direct competition with each other was town-planning and social housing. German achievements in this field had been paramount in the 1920s, and many of the German émigrés had been building *Siedlungen* in Germany at a time when few British architects had heard of *Existenzminimum* or *Zeilenbau*. Although it would be wrong to say that Britain made no progress in the direction of large-scale social housing in a contemporary idiom in the inter-war period (see 2.a.), little of revolutionary importance had been achieved by the time the Germans arrived. Britain lacked the radical visionaries, the "men with fiery swords" (as Gropius called them),[41] of which Germany had plenty. Whereas British modernists tended to have their feet firmly on the ground, drawing up visionary plans had become almost second nature to many architects of the German avant-garde. Some, such as Kaufmann at Frankfurt

[41] See letter Gropius to Giedion, July 22nd, 1936, GN (BHA) 12/242. Gropius talks about the lack of „fiery arch angels" to uproot British society, and the replacement of Coates with Richards as the leader of the MARS group, "but he does not have a fiery sword either".

and in Russia, had full-time jobs in the realisation of social utopias. Hence, when they came to Britain, the Germans naturally applied their visions to the British context, where they saw much room for improvement and progress in the field. Not all of the housing schemes they proposed were for social housing (Gropius' Windsor project, for instance, provided luxury flats), but they were all radical in concept, design and construction. And although none of the émigrés' proposals were realised (see 2.b.), and in many cases were not even taken very seriously, they nevertheless introduced the latest in international town-planning and housing ideas into Britain.[42] Projects such as Gropius' Windsor scheme [24], Mendelsohn's White City scheme [13], Kaufmann's St. Pancras scheme [14] and Breuer and Yorke's 'Garden City of the Future' [40] confronted the British architectural profession with the revolutionary possibilities of modern architecture in terms of land use, communal living and zoning. Such futuristic visions provoked little response in Britain during the 1930s other than feelings of threat and ridicule.

A look at the architecture of that period reveals the extent to which German émigrés paved the way for future British developments. The very principles on which modern post-war estates were based were ideas in the development of which Germany had played an essential role,[43] and in which *Zeilenbau* and the high-rise slab block had emerged as ideal concepts. Even Lubetkin, who took most of his inspiration from Le Corbusier, turned to the Germans when it came

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[42] Owing to the fact that many of the Germans (e.g. Gropius, Kaufmann, Korn) were long-standing members of CIAM, where they regularly exchanged ideas with representatives of other countries, it is no exaggeration to describe their ideas as the avant-garde of international developments in architecture and planning.

[43] These principles were concerned mainly with building upwards rather than outwards to ensure space and greenery, considering orientation for maximum sunlight and ventilation, and planning rationally to ensure maximum convenience in a minimum of space.

to town-planning issues, as the (freely applied) *Zeilenbau* layout of his London estates, such as Hallfield Estate in Paddington of 1949, reveal. A clear influence of German *Siedlungen* and, more specifically, Kaufmann's competition design for working class flats in reinforced concrete (as published in *The Architects' Journal* in 1935), can be detected in F. G. Southgate's Priory Court in Walthamstow [compare 45 and 46]. Southgate's blocks [46], which, like Kaufmann's, are five storeys high, raised on *piloti* and accessible via central staircases, also echo the staggered lay-out proposed in his scheme. The idea of staggered slab blocks, introduced into Britain by German émigrés in the 1930s, can also be found at Alton Estate West, Roehampton (designed by Powell, Cox, and others in 1953) [96].[44] Here, the arrangement of the large slabs echoes the staggered lay-out of the three blocks of flats in Gropius' original design for St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor.[45] The same device is used at Powell and Moya's Churchill Gardens in London (begun 1948) [95]. Here, the design of the long high-rise blocks is strongly reminiscent of the residential units featured in Breuer and Yorke's 'Garden City of the Future' of 1936 [compare 95 and 40]. The idea of a mixed and more loosely arranged development (as opposed to the strictly rational, repetitively linear *Zeilenbau* layout), which became popular in the 1950s, is often ascribed to British Garden City ideas and the influence of Le Corbusier. But does the intermixture of high- and medium-rise, point blocks and slab blocks seen at Alton West not also occur in Kaufmann's project for a rehousing scheme at St. Pancras and, to a certain extent, in Mendelsohn's White City scheme [compare 96, 13 and 14]? Indeed, these schemes suggest that German architects adopted the idea of mixed development much sooner than is generally assumed, and that they therefore had a more substantial and

[44] Although here the layout was also influenced by the steep slope of the site.

multi-faceted impact on British developments than they are usually credited with. Le Corbusier has often been held uniquely responsible for all evils of modern town-planning in the 1950s and '60s in Britain;[46] however, in fact, direct Corbusian influence on post-war British housing can be found only in the details, that is in terms of elevation design and internal organisation. Thus his Unité at Marseille inspired many British multi-storey flat blocks, as is pointedly demonstrated by the slab blocks at Alton West, which echo the Unité's arrangement in maisonettes and its use of rough concrete. On a larger scale, however, Le Corbusier's urban visions had less impact, because they were not designed for British sites, but locations in France or Utopia. The Germans, on the other hand, provided practical town-planning applications: their schemes were almost all[47] tailored to specific sites in English cities.[48] This inevitably brought visions closer to reality by applying them to an actual British context. But the fact remains that, although the Germans played an important role in paving the way for modern British post-war planning, the important figures did not stay to harvest the fruits of their work. Some, such as Arthur Korn, continued to spread German and CIAM ideas in Britain through teaching (see 2.b.), but British planning after the war soon developed into a movement with its own momentum, in which some of the younger émigrés participated, but few of the older German architects played an active role.

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[45] And previously in Gropius' project for luxury high-rise flats at Wannsee, Berlin, of 1930-1.
[46] By Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space* (London, 1972) or Alice Coleman, *Utopia on Trial* (London, 1985).
[47] Apart from Breuer and Yorke's 'Garden City of the Future'.
[48] Arthur Korn (with Samuely and other MARS members) even proposed a plan for the rebuilding of the whole of London after CIAM principles and in *Zeilenbau* layout. See chapter 2.b.

Town-planning and social housing apart, there are, overall, few German émigré architects who achieved national or international renown and architectural influence during their stay in Britain. Nevertheless, some who worked as architectural teachers left a strong and lasting impression on their students. Korn, for instance, who taught in Britain for 24 years, is remembered by many for his visionary, enthusiastic approach and "ebullient but sharply perceptive methods".[49] Walter Segal taught for only four years and ran only a modest private practice after the war, but as a pioneer of self-building and an advocate of low-cost timber-framed construction, his ideas proved influential. Although "his ideas were slow to take off during his lifetime",[50] a trust was set up after his death to promote his ideas, and by 1996, 150 houses in Britain had been built after the Segal method.[51] Moreover, some German émigrés reached influential positions as practising architects in Britain. Peter Moro and Bernd Engel both established themselves in successful practices in post-war Britain. Moro, who had been responsible for the interior design of the Royal Festival Hall of 1951, went on to become a recognised specialist in innovative modern theatre design, executing major commissions like the Playhouse Theatre at Nottingham and the Theatre Royal at Plymouth. The Moro partnership also received many commissions from local authorities, including the LCC, for housing, schools and other public buildings. Engel also founded his post-war success on public commissions: after his design for the redevelopment of Bradford City Centre, he was flooded with similar jobs for inner-urban redevelopment schemes (see 3.b.iii.). Hence Engel's work left a considerable impression on the architectural

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[49] Leslie Ginzburg, quoted in Benton, *A Different World*, p.177

[50] Christine Webb, "The house that Jon built", in *The Observer*, July 20th, 1996, p.11. Segal had initiated a self-building programme in Lewisham in 1975, but his ideas only received broader attention after his death. See also J. McKean, *Learning from Segal* (Basel, 1989).

face of Britain. Finally, Carlludwig Franck, although less influential during the inter-war period, experienced professional success after joining Joseph Emberton in practice in 1952.[52] Made a partner in 1957, Franck took over the practice after Emberton's death. Between 1956 and his retirement in 1971, he designed a large number of flats, mostly around Finsbury and Islington.

But the achievements of Segal, Moro, Engel or Franck are the achievements of individuals; they are not indicative of an influence of the Germans as a group. Is it in fact possible to talk about the émigrés as a coherent group? Given the disparate nature of their backgrounds and work in Britain, can one at any point generalise the achievement of individual émigrés by speaking of a 'German influence' on British architecture? When talking about German émigré architects as a group one immediately thinks of the Circle. But although the Circle originally had ambitions as an architectural forum, it never really progressed beyond a social function (see 2.a.). Its members may have exchanged architectural ideas, but their ideas were too varied to be summarised under a manifesto.[53] Moreover, the Circle was founded in 1943, when most radical ideas had already been proposed in Britain and a tradition of modernism already coalesced. Thus when looking for a collective impact of German architects on Britain it is necessary to turn once more to the pre-war period. Perhaps the most striking collective achievement of German émigrés is their involvement in architectural reform. In other words, wherever an architectural category was

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[51] See ibid. The Walter Segal Selfbuild Trust was set up by Jon Broome, himself an architect and practitioner of the Segal-method.

[52] Franck had worked for Tecton until 1948, prior to working as an assistant to Gollins Melvin and Partners. From 1950 to 1952, he had worked as an Associate Designer for the Festival of Britain

[53] The only way in which the existence of the Circle could have influenced British non-members is through the public lectures and events it organised, but in fact few of these seem to have offered radically new perspectives on architectural developments.

being re-thought in Britain, one was likely to find German architects contributing. The Germans' theoretical contribution to the development of modern social housing has already been discussed, but there were many other fields in which the work of the émigrés had a more visible impact in the 1930s. In seaside and entertainment architecture, for instance, Mendelsohn and Kaufmann contributed substantially to a radical stylistic and conceptual reform. In synagogue design, Landauer produced some of the earliest examples of modernist synagogues in Britain, while Freud and other Jewish émigrés continued this modernist tradition. In shop design, Landauer was one of the pioneers of a modern use of neon-lighting, while Kaufmann, together with Freud, Gropius and others, made a significant contribution to the changing face of the modern shop in Britain. In educational architecture, too, Germans played an important role: Gropius' and Kaufmann's ideas on the inter-relation between modern architecture and educational reform proved very influential, as did the visual model provided by Impington Village College. In industrial architecture, Fränkel, Kaufmann and others also provided models influential for future developments. And finally, in furniture and interior design, Breuer's work for Isokon was not an isolated example of groundbreaking design; many other émigrés designed modern furniture and thus contributed to the creation of a taste and market for modern design in Britain.[54]

[54] See Louise Campbell, "The Good New Days", in *The Architectural Review*, Vol.162, Sept. 1977, pp.177-183.

# CONCLUSION

"Acceptance of the new situation, but resistance too:
that is usually the fruitful formula if the displaced creator
continues to be creative."[1]

The final task is to summarise the findings of this thesis and to discuss their implications for the study of architectural migration. The most important contribution of the thesis has been to flesh out our understanding of the issue of architectural acculturation, and to discount any notion of the unaltered transplantability of architectural models from one country to another. The analysis of the work of a representative selection of émigrés has shown that none of the architects remained completely unaffected by the impact of their new working environment. Each was to some degree subject to a process of acculturation, that is the adaptation to both traditions and contemporary trends in British architectural culture. However, the émigré situation did not provoke one unified response. Instead, the ways in which this acculturation process manifested itself in their designs varied strongly from architect to architect. Thus while for instance the concessions to British culture in Mendelsohn's oeuvre are barely perceptible and the predominant impression is of continuity with his pre-emigration work, at the other end of the spectrum we find architects such as Jaretzki, who contextualised many of his designs by consciously emulating British traditions.

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[1] William Jordy, „The Aftermath of the Bauhaus in America", in Donald Fleming & Bernard Bailyn (eds.), *The Intellectual Migration - Europe and America 1930-1960* (Cambridge/Mass., 1969), p.523

In the literature, there is a strong tendency towards the equation of German émigré architects with modernism as it was practised in Germany during the Weimar period.[2] However, the study has shown that this conception is not entirely correct. The economic situation and the contemporary architectural climate in Britain made it necessary for the majority of German architects to be flexible and to compromise, and compromise often meant a more or less partial retreat from modernism. Hence, although the pursuit of modern ideas was an essential theme in the work of the émigrés, the directions which their work assumed in Britain go beyond the narrow definitions of a certain modernist style. Emigration, a new environment and wider trends in contemporary architecture inspired changes in the émigrés' approach to design. Architectural emigration should not be seen in terms of the import of a ready-made product, but rather of certain basic raw materials in the form of ideas and experience which would be put together in new ways according to the new set of conditions in Britain. Furthermore, the work of most of the émigrés was very heterogeneous in nature, both prior to and after emigrating to Britain. Several architects had only sporadically engaged with modernism before emigration, and very few were able to practice in an exclusively modernist idiom after emigration.

Therefore the well-known experience of a Mendelsohn or Gropius should not be taken as the quintessential émigré experience, but should instead be viewed in the context of the less familiar stories of Engel, Jaretzki and other less prominent figures. Also, by regarding the work of German émigré architects in a

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[2] Even Charlotte Benton in *A Different World*, seems to leave unquestioned her own assumption that 'émigré' exclusively meant 'modernist'. Equating the two terms, she writes for instance: "The field of greatest opportunity for émigrés - as for British modernists - was the design of private housing." (p.55), while failing to point out that not all émigrés felt as strong a commitment to modernism as Gropius, Mendelsohn or Lubetkin.

selective fashion, that is by concentrating on their modernist designs while disregarding all other work, a distorted picture of the émigré experience is created. (A characteristic example here is the treatment of Jaretzki: while the bulk of his work is ignored, the only time he receives mention in the literature is as the author of the modernist house at Prestbury.) In the above chapters an attempt has been made to correct such distortions by illuminating the émigré architects' experience in Britain from a variety of angles, not just the modernist one, and thus to challenge a purely modernist-centred conception. For the story of German architects in Britain cannot and should not be told exclusively in terms of modernism.

The cases analysed in this thesis have revealed that the issue of contextualisation, that is the coming to terms with national traditions and tastes, is the most central issue in the discussion about architectural emigration. Despite the variety of responses which emigration provoked among German architects, their work in Britain is united by a common desire to adapt their designs and ideological utterances to the new environment, its mentality, landscape, building customs and architectural traditions. This tendency I have called New Contextualism. Previous terms used in the historiography, which include 'new empiricism', 'new regionalism', the 'psychologizing tendency' and 'humanised modernism', tend to concentrate on partial aspects only. New Contextualism, on the other hand, comprises all architectural, psychological, socio-political and cultural elements which are involved in the developments described.

These contextualising tendencies, brought about by the migration of architects out of Germany and their adaptation of their design to the culture of their receiving countries, contributed substantially to the transformation of the canon of the International Style during the 1930s and beyond, both in Britain and internationally. It is here that the greatest achievement of German émigrés for British inter-war architecture lies. Having participated in the development of modern architecture in Germany, many émigrés were more willing to adapt the new architectural language to given conditions in Britain than were British architects themselves. While most British modernists were still coming to terms with Continental architecture of the 1920s, Gropius, Kaufmann, Breuer, Freud, Jaretzki, Proskauer and Fränkel all translated the modernist house into brick or wood, thus advancing the modernist vocabulary beyond its German prototype into a new diversity and contributing to the development of modernism in Britain. And by incorporating references to national building traditions, they may - consciously or unconsciously - have furthered public acceptance of modernism in Britain.

How can the influence of German émigrés on British inter-war architecture thus be summarised? The thesis has disputed the notion that German architects were responsible for the initial introduction of modernism in Britain. However, in terms of sheer numbers of individuals designing in a modernist idiom they certainly helped its dissemination by increasing the volume of built examples. In general, the Germans were rarely responsible for initiating reform; somebody else, it seems, had always been there first. Compared with the contribution of other modernists in Britain, such as Fry, and in particular that of other foreign modernists, such as Lubetkin, Goldfinger or even Connell, the contribution of

the Germans loses some of the elevated status it has been given by historians. Those who might potentially have made a significant impact on the course of British architecture, notably Mendelsohn and Gropius, lost their chance through lack of persistence; they left before Britain had had the chance to create great opportunities for them. Had they stayed, Britain would have secured some of the greatest names in modern architecture. As it was, these names are now associated with modern architecture in Germany and America, not Britain. Overall, there are very few German architects whose work after their emigration has come to be associated with British (rather than German) architecture. Yet while none of the Germans made as spectacular an individual impact as did other foreign architects in Britain, particularly Lubetkin, as a group they nevertheless played a considerable role in the dissemination and advancement of new ideas in Britain. German émigrés did not, as some believe, transform the face of British architecture in the inter-war period, but their work, ideas and presence helped to underpin and expand the modern movement in Britain.

The subject of evaluation remains as a final question. How, in other words, should architectural historians regard the acculturative tendencies evident in the émigrés' (especially the modernists') work? Opinion among contemporary observers has been divided. The larger camp was formed by those who supported adaptation as a necessary prerequisite for cultural integration. Lubetkin, for instance, apparently regarded adaptation as a virtue; he accused other foreign architects in inter-war Britain of a "lack of flexibility"[3] and of transplanting their architecture "in time and in space in such a way as to render

[3] Berthold Lubetkin, „Modern Architecture in England" (1937 for *American Architect and Architecture*), reprinted in Charlotte Benton (ed.), *Documents* (Milton Keynes, 1975), p.94

them meaningless".[4] On the other hand there were those who condemned the changes brought about by emigration as a shabby compromise, accusing the émigrés of adapting too much and thus 'betraying' the modernist cause. Probably the most ardent condemnation of New Contextualism as a means of adapting the International Style to post-emigration conditions has come from Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, who has described what she calls 'diaspora' architecture as a "comedy of errors played out by the alien mind anxiously disguised in native costume,"[5] asserting that because they "only wanted to be accepted,"[6] diaspora architects did not see that their work had become a "farce" and "schizophrenic sleight of hand".[7] The contrast between these opposing opinions illustrates poignantly that the assessment of the work of émigré architects is utterly dependent on the assessor's individual perspective. What it should perhaps teach us is that any kind of opinionated judgement, whether positive or negative, of the émigrés' work - beyond a descriptive discussion of the changes occurring and their origins - does injustice to the architects and the complex position they found themselves in as émigrés.

Finally, this thesis makes no claims to be a definitive study. Many aspects of this multi-faceted topic had to remain unexplored due to word limits and time. The stories of several émigré architects still lie uncovered, and some of those named in this thesis still have little biographical detail attached to their names. One aspect of the subject which still begs more research is the role of German

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[4] ibid., p.95

[5] Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, „The Diaspora" in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians USA*, Vol.24, March 1965, p.24. Sibyl Moholy-Nagy was the second wife of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, the Hungarian artist, designer and Bauhaus teacher who had came to England in 1935 before emigrating to the USA in 1937, where he set up the New Bauhaus in Chicago. Sibyl's text is written mainly in reference to the work of émigrés in America, but can easily be extended onto the British experience.

[6] ibid., p.25

architects in the development of British architectural education in the 1930s and 1940s. Another avenue down which further research might venture is the contribution of German architects to technical developments in British building during the inter-war period including a closer examination of the relationship between engineering and architecture. Additionally, the post-war period, which was beyond the remit of this study, deserves closer attention as regards the contribution of German architects to innovation in architecture. The total contribution of German émigrés to British architectural history is indeed beyond the scope of one study.

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[7] ibid.

# CONTEXTUALISING THE CONTINENTAL:

## The Work of German Émigré Architects in Britain, 1933-45

Volume Two of Two Volumes

**Christina Thomson**

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of History of Art

University of Warwick

August 1999

# CONTENTS

## Volume Two

# GLOSSARY OF GERMAN and other foreign TERMS

**Anschluß**
*Lit.* Joining. Term used to describe the annexation of Austria by Germany in 1939.

**Autobahn** (pl. Autobahnen)
motorway

**Bau** (*n.*), **bauen** (*v.*)
*n.* 1. edifice, building 2. building process 3. architecture
*v.* to build, to erect

**Blut und Boden**
*Lit.* Blood and Soil. Nationalist ideological concept which postulates the relationship of the land and the *Volk*, drawing upon and strengthening an organic nationalist metaphor. After Darré's 1930 book *Neuadel aus Blut und Boden.*

**BDA (= Bund Deutscher Architekten)**
Association of German Architects. National body, membership of which is however not compulsory. *Gleichgeschaltet* during the Third Reich in order to reinforce anti-Semitic legislation among architects.

**CIAM (= Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne)**
International Congress for Modern Architecture. Founded in 1928, dominated by Le Corbusier. International forum for the discussion and dissemination of modernist ideas in architecture and planning. Issued 'Charter of Athens' in 1933, which laid down the basic principles of modernist town planning, particularly zoning. Existed until 1959.

**Deutscher Werkbund**
Association of German avant-garde manufacturers, designers, architects, artists and writers. Founded in 1907 in Munich. Leading members: Behrens, van de Velde, Taut and Gropius. Aimed at creating a national art and quality design through sound construction and the collaboration of artist, craftsman and architect. Influential in early industrial design.

**Existenzminimum**
*Lit.* Minimum (needed) for existence. Term coined during the scientific research into housing and planning at Frankfurt's *Siedlungs* projects in the 1920s. Used to describe the basic needs of space and amenities to be provided for in flats for mass-housing.

**Führer**
*Lit.* Guide, leader. Name given to Hitler as the leader of the National Socialist movement.

**Gesamtkunstwerk**
*Lit.* Total Work of Art. Creative approach in which the final work encompasses all arts, including architecture, art, design, theatre, music etc. An idea particularly popular in the German avant-garde of the 1910s and 20s, especially the Expressionist movement and the Bauhaus.

**Gleichschaltung** *n.* (gleichschalten *v.*)
*Lit.* Synchronisation, streamlining. Standard term in the historiography of the Third Reich used to describe the standardisation of all political, economic, social and cultural institutions under Hitler.

**Heimatschutz**
*Lit.* Protection of the homeland. German movement for the protection of the environment and natural landscape, as well as of national traditions and cultural values. During the 1920s and 30s strongly bound up in nationalist and *völkisch* ideas.

**Heimatstil**
Traditionalist architectural style which uses elements of regional German traditions as well as local building materials.

**Kindertransport** (pl. Kindertransporte)
*Lit.* Transport of children. During emigration procedures, children separated from their parents were transported to safe countries in big groups. On arrival, they were looked after by charities, taken into care by homes or foster families until they were re-united with their parents, often years later, some never.

**Landhaus**
country house; also: a house in the country

**Neues Bauen**
*Lit.* New Building. German term for new inter-war architecture of the modernist style which later became known in English-speaking circles as the 'International Style'. Term used by contemporaries in the 1920s and those who developed the idiom.

**Neue Sachlichkeit**
*Lit.* New Sobriety, New Objectivity. New anti-emotional tendency towards rationalism, precision and detailed observation. Originated in painting in Germany in the 1920s. Soon after term used in architecture and design also to indicate machinist rationalism.

**NSDAP (= Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei)**
*Lit.* National Socialist German Workers' Party. Nazi party in existence since 1920, since 1921 under Hitler's leadership. After 1933 official party of government.

**Reichskammer der bildenden Künste**
Reich's Chamber of the Visual Arts. Visual Arts branch of the Reichskulturkammer.

**Reichskulturkammer**
Reich's Cultural Chamber. Government body controlling and representing all cultural activity. Used in the Third Reich to reinforce anti-Semitic legislation within the cultural sector.

**Reichskristallnacht** (also: **Kristallnacht**)
*Lit.* The Reich's Night of the Crystals. Name given to day of major Nazi-organised mob rising on 9th -10th November 1938 in Berlin and other German cities. Destruction of synagogues, Jewish homes and shops, resulting in much broken glass, gave rise to the name.

**sachlich**
objective, sober, rational

**Siedlung** (pl. Siedlungen)
*Lit.* settlement. Housing estate. Concept explored and promoted through German municipalities (especially Frankfurt and Berlin) during the 1920s as an answer to a national housing shortage. Famous for their exploration of modernist architectural principles.

**Stadt**
city, town

**TH (= Technische Hochschule)**
Institute of higher education in Germany with university status and the technical character of a British Polytechnic. Most common place of architectural education during the inter-war period in Germany.

**völkisch**
*Lit.* 'of the people' (from *Volk* - the people). Closely bound up with nationalist ideology.

**Wohnung**
flat, apartment

**Zeilenbau**
*Lit.* Line building. Rationalised town planning principle in which blocks of flats are laid out in parallel straight rows aligned to ensure ideal lighting and air conditions for the inhabitants. Developed in Europe during the 1920s; term coined in Germany.

## APPENDIX 1: Architects

- Architects of nationalities other than German are only included if they received a large part of their education in Germany and/or lived and worked in Germany for an extensive period. (Original nationality indicated in brackets: *Au.= Austrian, R.= Russian, H.= Hungarian, S.= Swiss*)
- Names in brackets indicate name changes after emigration.
- Emigration dates in bold print and without any further specifications stand for the year of arrival in Britain.
- 'RIBA membership' column lists membership category, joining date and membership number (in brackets). Membership categories (as they existed until 1972): *A.= Associate, F.= Fellow, L.= Licentiate*. Years of entry in category cited as given in RIBA Calendars.
- Key to abbreviations in 'Work' column: *PP= private practice, AA/AD= architectural assistant / draughtsperson, SA= salaried architect (employed by state or city authority), NWE= no or little work experience or no qualification, AT = Architectural Teacher*
- Partnerships which consisted of only occasional collaboration are indicated '(occ)'.
- Blank cells signify that no information has been confirmed; dashes stand for 'does not apply', ✓ = Yes, ✗ = No

| **NAME** nationality if not German in brackets | **DATES** of birth and death | **EMIGRATION** incl. before & after Britain | left GB ? | **R.I.B.A.** membership | Jewish ? | **WORK** before emigration | **Partnership** in GB (pre-1945) | In-terned ? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AHRENDS**, Bruno | 1878-1948 | Italy'36, **1939**, S.Africa'48 | ✓ | -- | ex-✓ Prot | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **ASCHER**, Felix | 1883-1952 | **1938** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Hamburg | ✗ | |
| **BREUER**, Marcel *(H.)* | 1902-1981 | Switz & Hung'33, **1935**, USA'37 | ✓ | -- | ✓ | PP Berlin | '35-7 Yorke | -- |
| **BRIGGS**, Ella *(Au.)* | 1880-1977 | **1936** | ✗ | L. '48 (6228) | | PP Berlin | ✗ | |
| **CASPARI**, Peter | 1908- | **1933**, Canada'50 | ✓ | F. '48 (4374) | | '32-3 AA Berlin | ✗ | ✗ army '40-3 |
| **DYRENFURTH**, Ernst | 1888-? | **c1938** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP/SA Kiel | ✗ | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ENGEL** (ENGLE), Bernd (Bernard) | 1901-1973 | **1935** | ✗ | L. '48 (6231), F. '49 (4446) | | PP Hamburg (with father) | '36-c53 Young | ✓ |
| **FRANCK**, Carlludwig (Carl Ludwig) Philipp | 1904-1985 | **1937** | ✗ | A. '51 (13178) | wife ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **FRÄNKEL** (FRANKEL), Rudolf | 1901-1974 | Romania'33, **1937**, USA'50 | ✓ | L. '47, F. '48 (4378) | ✓ | PP Berlin & Bucharest | ✗ | ✗ |
| **FREUD**, Ernst *(Au.)* | 1892-1970 | **1933** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✗ |
| **FRIEDLÄNDER**, S. | | **c1939** | | | ✓ | | | |
| **GELLHORN**, Alfred | 1885-1972 | Spain'33, **1935**, S.Amer.'36, D.'60s | ✓ | -- | ex-✓ Prot | PP Berlin & Halle | -- | -- |
| **GOLDSCHMIDT**, Gertrud | c1909- | **c1938/9**, Australia? | | -- | ✓ | AA | | |
| **GREIFENHAGEN**, Johann | c1877-? | **c1938** | | | | | | |
| **GROPIUS**, Walter | 1883-1969 | **1934**, USA'36 | ✓ | -- | ✗ | PP Berlin | '34-6 Fry | -- |
| **GUTKIND**, Erwin Anton | 1886-1968 | France'33, **1935**, USA'55 | ✓ | -- | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✗ |
| **GUTMANN**, Robert | 1910-1981 | **1939**, Germany ca. late '50s | ✓ | | anti-Nazi | AA Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **HERRMANN**, Erich | c1909-? | **1936** | | A. '51 (12857) | ✓ | | | |
| **HERRMANN**, Friedrich H. | 1898-1983 | **1937** | ✗ | A. '47, F. '50 (9140) | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **HERZ**, Rudolf | 1897-? | **1938** or '**39** | ✗ | F.'50s (5015) | | PP & AT Berlin | ✗ | Army '39-47 |
| **HÖNIG**, Edgar | 1886-61 | France, Belg, Switz'33ff., **1938**? | ✗ | L. '47 (6234) | | PP Berlin | ✗ | |
| **JAFFE**, Hans Bernard | c1887-? | ? | ✗ | | | | | |
| **JARETZKI**, Hans Sigmund | 1890-1956 | **1933** | ✗ | L. '48 (6267) | ✓ | PP Berlin | '35-6 Bradwell | ✗ |
| **JELINEK-KARL**, Rudolph *(S.)* | 1910-? | **1936** | ✗ | L. '47 (6136) | | AA Paris & Algeria | ✗ | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **KAUFMANN** (KENT), Eugen(e) Karl (Charles) | 1892-1984 | (USSR'31), **1933** | ✗ | L. '40, F. '41 (3847) | ✓ | SA Frankfurt & USSR | '34-c37 Towndrow, Benjamin (occ) | ✗ |
| **KORN**, Arthur *(Au.)* | 1891-1978 | 1934, Yugo'34, **1937**, Austria'69 | ✓ | L. '48 (6289) | ✓ | PP Berlin | '37-8 Yorke | ✓ |
| **KRETCHMER**, Wilhelm | c1918-1984 | Italy, France, **c1938** | ✗ | A. '51 (13237) | | AA Italy | ✗ | |
| **KURZ**, Alexander *(Au.)* | 1887-? | Austria'34, **1935** | | L. '47 (6236) | | '29-33 PP Berlin, '34 PP Vienna | Rachlis (occ) | |
| **LANDAUER**, Fritz | 1883-1968 | **1936 or '37** | ✗ | -- | ✓ | PP München | ✗ | |
| **LESSER**, Georg Hermann | 1889-1963 | **c1939** | ✗ | | | SA Berlin | | |
| **MARCUS**, Friedrich Lucas | 1888-1975 | France'33, Spain'34, Fr., **1939** | ✗ | | | PP Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **MENDELSOHN**, Erich | 1887-1953 | **1933**, Palest.'39, USA'41 | ✓ | F. '39 (3531) | ✓ | PP Berlin | '33-6 Chermayeff | ✗ |
| **MEYER**, Hans | 1881-1959 | | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | |
| **MOLTKE**, Wilhelm Viggo von | 1911- | **1937**, Sweden'38, USA'40 | ✓ | -- | ✗ | NWE studied until '37 in Berlin | -- | -- |
| **MORO**, Peter | 1911-1998 | **1936** | ✗ | L. '48, later F. (6207) | ✓ „1/4" | NWE graduated '36 | '39-40 Davies | ✓ |
| **NEUMARK**, Friedrich | | **c1939**, Dtld. '45 | ✓ | | | | | |
| **OCHS**, Eugen Siegmund | | **1935** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin | | |
| **PROSKAUER** (PROWER), Albert (Aubrey) | 1907-1958 | **1933** | ✗ | A. '47 (9386) | | SA Berlin | Le Mare (occ) | |
| **RACHLIS**, Michael *(R.)* | 1905-1953 | **1935** | ✗ | mainly interiors after 1935 | | Berlin | Lesser (occ) | |
| **REIFENBERG**, Heinz | c1894-1968 | Palestine'33, **1938** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | |
| **ROSENBERG**, Gerhard | 1912-1995 | **1934**, N.Zealand '50s | ✓ | A. '47 (9119) | ✓ | NWE graduated in GB '35 | ✗ | ✓ |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ROSENTHAL**, Hans Werner | 1907-? | Palestine'35, **1936** | ✗ | A. '48 (9562) | ✓ | AA Berlin & Palestine | ✗ | ✓ |
| **ROSENTHAL**, Harry | 1892-1966 | Palestine'33, **1938** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin & Palestine | ✗ | ✓ |
| **RUHEMANN**, Fritz A. | 1891-1982 | **1936** | ✗ | L. '49, F. '50 (4525) | | PP Berlin | '36-46 Dugdale | ✓ |
| **SAMUELY**, Felix J. *(Au.)* | 1902-1958 | USSR'31, **1933** | ✗ | engineer-arch | | PP engineer Berlin | ✗ | ✗ |
| **SCHOENDORFF**, Ellen | | ?, USA '52 | ✓ | | | | | |
| **SCHREINER**, (Jo)Hannes *(Au.)* | 1902-? | **1933** | | L. '46 (5979) | | AA Berlin, '32 PP Berlin | ✗ | ✓ |
| **SEGAL**, Walter | 1907-1985 | **1936** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Ascona & Majorca | ✗ | ✗ |
| **SINGER**, Franz *(Au.)* | 1896-1954 | **1934** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Vienna Bauhaus pupil | ✗ | |
| **WALTER**, Marianne (née LÖHNBERG) | 1910- | **1937** | ✗ | A. '42 (8503) | ✓ | AA Berlin | '37-8 Entwistle | ✗ |
| **WITTKOWER**, Margot (née HOLZMANN) | 1908-1995 | **1933**, USA'56 | ✓ | -- | husband ✓ | Berlin | ✗ | ✗ |
| **WOLFSOHN** (WOLFSON), James I. | 1886-c1990? | **1938** | ✗ | | ✓ | PP Berlin | ✗ | |
| **WOLLENBERG**, Adolf | 1874-? | ?'33, **1936** | | L.'47 (6196) | | PP Berlin | | |
| **ZWEIGENTHAL**, Hermann *(Au.)* | | **c1934**, Brazil c'37 | ✓ | -- | | PP Berlin | | -- |

# APPENDIX 2: List of Works in Britain (1933 to 1945)

- Works are listed in roughly chronological order. A question mark signifies that no exact date could be established for the design.
- **Executed** works are listed in normal font, **unexecuted** designs are in *italics*.
- An asterisk* signifies that material (plans, elevations, etc.) for the object marked can be found in the Drawings Collection of the RIBA in London.
- In the case of partnerships, all projects published under or signed with the name of both partners are included here, regardless of matters of attribution.
- Lists are not in all cases comprehensive, but include all the works discussed in the text. In most cases not included in the lists are furniture, exhibition and interior design work, and alterations and additions to existing buildings. (For those see references in the text.)
- Source references are selective, not comprehensive. For key to abbreviations in source references see end of list.

**BREUER (with Yorke)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| masters' houses (Ainger and Beson House), Eton College, Buckinghamshire* | 1935-8 | *AR*, Jan. 1939, pp.32-3<br>*A&BN*, 3 Feb 1939, pp.168-9<br>Yorke, pp.54-5 |
| 'Sea Lane House', Angmering-on-Sea, Sussex* | 1936-8 | *AR*, Jan. 1939, pp.29-31<br>Yorke, pp.88-9 |
| *'Garden City of the Future', for Cement and Concrete Association** | 1936 | *AJ*, 26 March 1936, pp.470, 477-482<br>*AR*, April 1936, p.168 |
| exhibition pavilion, for Gane, Royal Agricultural Show, Bristol* | 1936 | Yorke, pp.58-9<br>*AR*, Vol.80, 1936, pp.69-70 |
| remodelling London Theatre Studio, Islington* | 1936-7 | *AJ*, 29 July 1937, pp.186-8, 995-6 |
| *school, News Chronicle competition* | 1937 | *AJ*, 23 March, 1937, p.537 |
| *ski hotel, Ober-Gurgl, Tyrol* | 1937-8 | *Arch Rec*, Sept 1938, pp.57-9<br>Driller, pp.84-6 |

**CASPARI**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 4 Acol Road, West Hampstead, London | 1934 | Caspari RIBA Nomination Papers, RIBAA |
| 102 Baker Street, London, W1 | 1935 | Caspari RIBA Nomination Papers, RIBAA |
| Coleman Court, flats, Wandsworth, London | ? | Benton, p.147 |
| West End Court, flats, West Hampstead, London | 1938-9 | *AJ*, 7 Sept 1939, p.343 |
| houses in Hampstead Garden Suburb, St. John's Wood & elsewhere in London | 1934-8 | Benton, p.148 |

**ENGEL (with Young)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 21 & 23 Manor House Drive, Brondesbury Park, London | 1937-8 | *Builder*, 22 Dec 1939, pp.849f<br>*AI*, Vol.17, Dec 1938, p.184 |
| house at Tenterden Gardens, Hendon, Middlesex | c1938-9 | *Builder*, 25 Aug 1939, p.325 |
| 'Queenswood', Stanmore, Middlesex | c1939-40 | *Builder*, 9 Feb 1940, p.190 |
| Kipling Memorial Buildings, Imperial Service College, Windsor | c1939-40 | *Builder*, 19 Jan 1940, pp.101f |
| 24-29 Hyde Park Square | ? | Mrs. Engel |
| house in Hendon, Middlesex | c1940 | *Parthenon*, May 1941, pp.87-9 |

**FRANCK (for Tecton)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| extension to Gestetner factory, Tottenham | c1938 | Allan, p.257 |

**FRÄNKEL**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 'Hillcrest', 89 Winnington Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London | 1938 | HGSA (LMA) |
| 1 & 2 Halsbury Close, Stanmore, Middlesex | 1938-40 | *AR*, Nov 1940, pp.136-7<br>*AJ*, 28 Nov 1940, pp.439-441 |
| house in Pynnacles Close, Stanmore | ? | Hugh Courts |
| house on Stanmore Hill, Stanmore | ? | Harrow Borough Council, Conservation Department |
| 19 Chestnut Drive, Stanmore | c1939 | Harrow Borough Council, Conservation Department |
| offices and machine tool showroom, London | 1939 | *AR*, April 1949, Vol.105, pp.169-170 |
| factory canteen | 1944 | *AJ*, 27 April 1944, pp.317-9 |
| machine tool service station, Birmingham | 1945 | *AR*, April 1949, Vol.105, pp.170-1<br>*PA*, April 1951, No.4, pp.81-3 |

**FREUD**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| Music Room, Pine House, Churt, Surrey | c1936 | *Country Life*, 26 Sep 1936, pp.36ff |
| 14 Neville Drive, Hampstead | 1936 | auctioneers' prospectus, Freud photo collection, BAL |
| 1-6 Frognal Close, Hampstead | 1936-8 | *AJ*, Vol.88, 1 Sept 1938, pp.373-5<br>*Building*, July 1938, pp.269 |
| Belvedere Court, flats, Lyttleton Rd, Hampstead Garden Suburb | 1938 | *The Builder*, Vol.156, 10 Feb 1939, pp.293-4<br>prospectus, Freud photo collection, BAL |
| 'The Weald', Betchworth, Surrey | 1939 | *Good Housekeeping*, June 1937, pp.76-7<br>Gould, Plate 50 |

...***continued***...

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 'Longshore', weekend house, Walberswick, Suffolk | 1930s | photo, Freud photo collection, BAL |

**GROPIUS (with Fry)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| *luxury flats, St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor* | 1934-5 | *AR*, May 1935, pp.188-192<br>prospectus „Where Life...", BAL & PA (UEA) |
| house in Old Church Street (Levy House), Chelsea, London* | 1935 | *AJ*, 24 Dec 1936, pp.869-871<br>*AR*, Dec 1936, pp.149-253<br>Yorke, pp.27-31 |
| *theatre at Dartington Hall, South Devon* | 1935 | Nerdinger, cat., p.264 |
| *sanatorium, Papworth, Cambridgeshire* | 1935-6 | *Circle*, pp.21-22<br>*AJ*, Vol.86, 1937, p.705 |
| *student dormitories, Christ's College, Cambridge* | 1935-6 | *AJ*, Vol.87, 3 Feb 1938, pp.202-3, 241<br>*AJ*, Vol.109, 3 Feb 1949, p.116 |
| 'Wood House' (Donaldson House), Shipbourne, Kent | 1936-7 | *AR*, Dec. 1936, p.258<br>*AR*, Vol.83, Feb. 1937, pp.61-63<br>*Country Life*, 26 Feb 1938, pp.x-xi<br>Yorke, pp.86-7 |
| Denham Film studios, for London Film Production, London | 1936 | Elliott, p.2<br>Nerdinger, cat., p.267 |
| Village College, Impington, Cambridgeshire* | 1936-9 | IVCA<br>*AR*, Dec 1939, pp.225-253<br>*AJ*, 21 Dec 1939, pp.734-740<br>*AJ*, 9 Oct 1941, pp.237-8, pp.245-8 |
| *plan for MARS exhibition** | Apr 1937 | RIBADC |
| electrical showrooms, for Mortimer Gall, Canon Street, London | 1937 | *AJ*, 5 Aug 1937, pp.229-230 |
| The Flat of '37, Manchester, for Kendal Milne and Co. | 1937 | prospectus, PA (UEA), PP/24/4/20 |

**JARETZKI**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 'Pennsylvania', Prestbury, Cheshire | 1935-6 | *Ideal Home*, Oct 1936, pp.266-274 |
| 6 Nutley Terrace, Hampstead, London | 1937 | Eve Haas |
| 42-6 Netherhall Gardens and 72 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead* | 1937-8 | Eve Haas<br>Benton, p.129 |
| 17 & 18 Holly Walk, Hampstead | ? | Benton, p.129 |
| house in Platt's Lane, Hampstead | ? | Eve Haas |
| munitions factory | c1938-9 | Benton, p.172 |

**JELINEK-KARL (with Weston)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| Rosehill Court, Carshalton, Surrey | 1938 | *AJ*, 23 Oct 1941, pp.279-281 |

**KAUFMANN**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| shops in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham etc. for Rothman, Moss Bros., Eastern, Fullers etc. | since 1933 | various journals, publications and archives |
| 55 Victoria Drive, Wandsworth, Wimbledon (with Elisabeth Benjamin) | 1934-5 | *AR*, Oct 1935, pp.127ff<br>Yorke, pp.36-7 |
| factory for razor blades, Slough | 1935 | Kent RIBA Nomination Papers, RIBAA |
| *workers' flats, Cement Marketing Company competition* | 1935 | competition catalogue, Franck papers, BAL |
| Junior Block, King Alfred School, Hampstead | 1936 | *AR*, Jan 1937, pp.10ff |
| *houses at Deal, one for F.B. Stennett** | 1936 | Benton, p.175 |
| *rehousing scheme, St. Pancras* | 1936 | *RIBA Journal*, 19 Dec 1936, p.165 |
| private house, Slough | 1937 | Kent RIBA Nomination Papers, *RIBAA* |
| 14-20 (even) Willowhayne Lane, Angmering-on-Sea, Sussex | 1936 | *AR*, Dec 1936, pp.271ff<br>Carter, pp.56-7 |
| architect's own house, 24 Pentley Park, Welwyn Garden City | 1937-8 | *AR*, Oct 1939, pp.205ff<br>*AJ*, 28 Dec 1939, pp.62ff |
| Cedar Lodge, Woodford Green, Redbridge, London | ? | Kent RIBA Nomination Papers |

**KORN (with Yorke)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| flats, Lettsom Street, Camberwell, London | 1939 | Yor/Gib, p.71 |

**LANDAUER**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| various commercial façades for Boots, Burton et al.* | since 1935 | RIBADC<br>Benton, p.58 |
| *'The Cedars', flats, North Hill, Highgate, London** | 1935 | RIBADC<br>*Kunst im Exil*, p.174 |
| North Western Reform Synagogue, Alyth Gardens, Golders Green, London* | 1935-6 | Benton, p.130<br>Krinsky, p.429 |
| Willesden Green United Synagogue, Heathfield Park, London* | 1936-8 | *AJ*, 14 April, 1938, p.617 |
| *flats, Clarkenhouse Rd, Sheffield** | 1938 | RIBADC |
| *Crematorium for Cambridge** | ? | RIBADC |

**MENDELSOHN (with Chermayeff)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea | 1933 | Zevi, pp.218-225 |
| 'Shrubs Wood' (Nimmo House), Newland Park, Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire | 1933-5 | *AR*, Nov. 1935, pp.174ff<br>Zevi, p.217 |
| *house for Earl de la Warr, Beaulieu* | 1934 | *Mendelsohn I*, p.33 |
| I.C.I. Research Laboratories, Blackley, Manchester | 1934 | *AR*, March 1938, pp.118-126<br>*JRIBA*, March 7th, 1938, p.44<br>Zevi, p.217 |
| house in Old Church Street (Cohen House), Chelsea, London* | 1935 | *AJ*, 24 Dec 1936, pp.869-871<br>Zevi, pp.228-230<br>Yorke, pp.32-3 |
| *redevelopment scheme, White City, London* | 1935 | Zevi, p.226<br>*AR*, April 1936, p.164 |
| *flats, Chiswick, London* | 1935 | Zevi, p.227 |
| *hotel and medical baths, Southsea* | 1935-6 | Zevi, pp.231-232<br>*Circle* |
| *house on Frinton Park estate* | before 1937 | Carter, p.40 |
| *hotel and multi-storey garage, Blackpool* | 1937 | *AD&C*, Aug 1939, p.279<br>Zevi, p.233 |
| Gilbey Offices, Camden, London | 1937 | *A&BN*, 30 July 1937, pp.149-151 |
| *hospital, Hyde Park, competition design (with Schreiner)* | 1938 | Achenbach, p.91<br>*Building*, April 1939, pp.141-143 (for Schreiner's later version) |

**MORO (with Llewelyn-Davies)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 'Harbour Meadow', Birdham, near Chichester | 1938-9 | *AR*, April 1941<br>*Mod Hs Revisited*, pp.8-14 |

**PROSKAUER (with Le Mare)**

| Project | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 'Cedar Lodge', Woodford Green, Redbridge, Essex | 1936 | *AJ*, 29 Oct 1936<br>*AR*, Dec 1936, pp.285ff |

**RUHEMANN (with Dugdale)**

| Object | Date | Sources |
|---|---|---|
| 2 South Parade, Bedford Park, London | 1937-8 | *AR*, Feb 1939, pp.88ff |

(For key to abbreviations in source references see following page!)

## Abbreviations in Source References

| | |
|---|---|
| *A&BN* | *The Architect and Building News* |
| Achenbach | Sigrid Achenbach, *Erich Mendelsohn. 1887-1953. Ideen, Bauten, Projekte* (Berlin, 1987) |
| *AD&C* | *Architectural Design and Construction* |
| *AI* | *Architecture Illustrated* |
| *AJ* | *Architect's Journal* |
| Allan | John Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin. Architecture and the Tradition of Progress* (London, 1992) |
| *Arch Rec* | *Architectural Record (*combined with *American Architecture & Architect)* |
| *AR* | *Architectural Review* |
| Benton | Charlotte Benton, *A Different World - Emigré Architects in Britain 1928-58*, exhibition catalogue (London, 1995) |
| Carter | Ella Carter (ed.), *Seaside Houses and Bungalows* (London,1937) |
| *Circle* | Gabo, Nicholson & Martin (eds.), *Circle - International Survey of Constructive Art* (New York & Washington, 1971) |
| Driller | Joachim Driller, *Marcel Breuer. Die Wohnhäuser, 1923-73* (Stuttgart, 1998) |
| Elliott | David Elliott, *Gropius in England. A Documentation 1934-1937* (London, 1974) |
| *JRIBA* | *The Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* |
| Krinsky | Carol Herselle Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe. Architecture, History, Meaning* (New York, 1985) |
| *Kunst im Exil* | Hartmut Frowein (ed.), *Kunst im Exil in Großbritannien, 1933-1945*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1986) |
| Nerdinger, cat. | Winfried Nerdinger, *Walter Gropius - Zeichnungen, Pläne, Photos, Werkverzeichnis*, exhibition catalogue (Berlin, 1985) |
| *Mendelsohn I* | Modern British Architecture, *Erich Mendelsohn 1887-1953* (London, 1987) |
| *Mod Hs Revisited* | Twentieth Century Architecture, No.2, *The Modern House Revisited,* publ. by the 20th Century Society (London, 1996) |
| *PA* | *Progressive Architecture* |
| Yorke | F. R. S. Yorke, *The Modern House in England* (London, 1937) |
| Yor/Gib | F. R. S. Yorke & F. Gibberd, *The Modern Flat* (London, 1950, orig.1937) |
| Zevi | Bruno Zevi, *Erich Mendelsohn. Opera Completa. Architetture e immagini architettoniche* (Milano, 1970) |

(For other abbreviations see list of archives on following page.)

## COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVAL MATERIAL consulted and their abbreviations as used in the footnotes

- Collections and their contents are listed in alphabetical order.

Akademie der Künste, Berlin (AdK)
— Harry Rosenthal papers
— Adolf Rading papers (Rad)
— Richard Döcker papers

Architects' Registration Council UK, London (ARCUK)
— membership records

Bauhaus Archiv, Berlin (BHA)
— Walter Gropius papers (GN)

Birmingham Central Library Archives Department, Birmingham (BCL)

Bodleian Library, Oxford (BO)
— papers of the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL), formerly Academic Assistance Council

British Architectural Library at the RIBA, London (BAL)
a) Archival Collection
— Adams, Holden & Pearson papers (AHP)
— Circle papers (C)
— C. L. P. Franck papers (FrC)
— Design and Industries Association papers (DIA)
— Free German Institute for Science and Learning papers (FGISL)
— Ernst Freud papers (FrE)
— F. H. Herrmann papers (HeF)
— Eugene Kent papers (KeE)
— Berthold Lubetkin papers (LuB)
— Harry Peach papers (PeH)
— Godfrey Samuel papers (SaG)
— Arnold Whittick papers (WhA)
— F. R. S. Yorke papers (YoF)
b) Photograph Collection

Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt (DAM)
— Ernst May papers
— Hannes Meyer papers

Freud Museum and Archive, London (FMA)
— papers of the Sigmund Freud family

Hampstead Garden Suburb Archives (HGSA) at the London Metropolitan Archives, London

Impington Village College Archive, Cambridgeshire (IVC)

King Alfred School Archive, Hampstead, London (KAS)

London Metropolitan Archives, London (LMA)
— architectural collection

Mendelsohn Archive at the Kunstbibliothek, Berlin (MA)

New Zealand Institute of Architects, Wellington (NZIA)

Pritchard Archive (PA) at the University of East Anglia, Norwich (UEA)
— Jack Pritchard Papers (PP)

RIBA Archives, London (RIBAA)
— Ernö Goldfinger papers (GoE)
— RIBA Refugee Committee papers (RCP)

RIBA Drawings Collection, London (RIBADC)

Royal Incorporation of Scottish Architects, Edinburgh (RIAS)

Royal Institute of British Architects, London (RIBA) → see BAL, RIBAA & RIBADC

Warburg Institute Archive, London (WIA)
— Institute Correspondence (IC)

Additionally, I have consulted private collections of photographs, drawings, newspaper cuttings and other publications in the possession of the late Peter Moro, Mrs. Marianne Walter, Mrs. R. Engel and Eve Haas.

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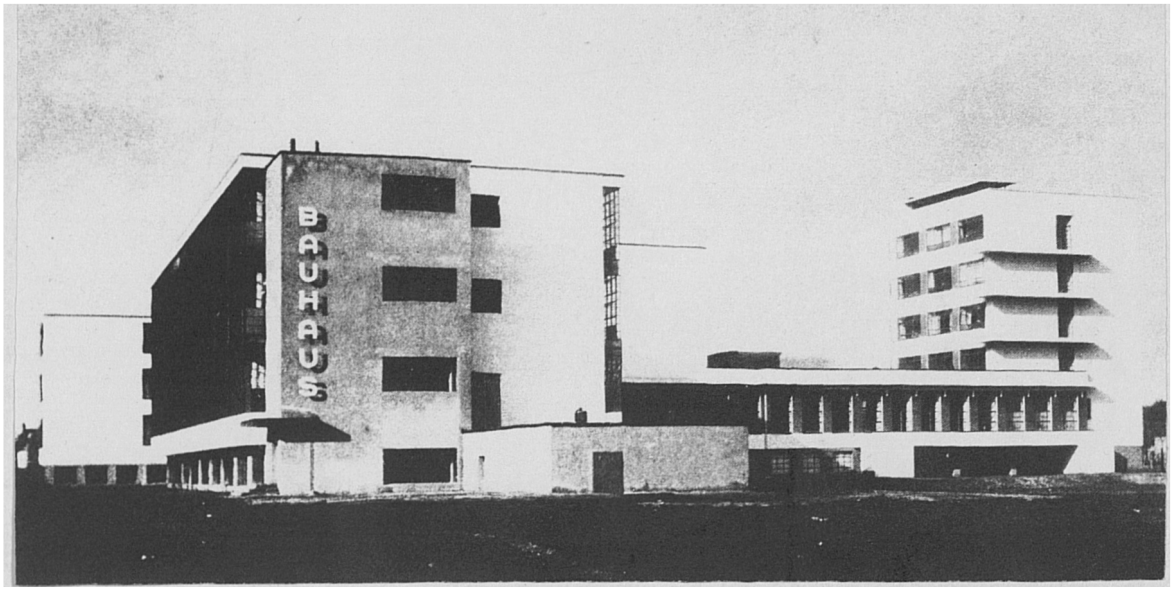
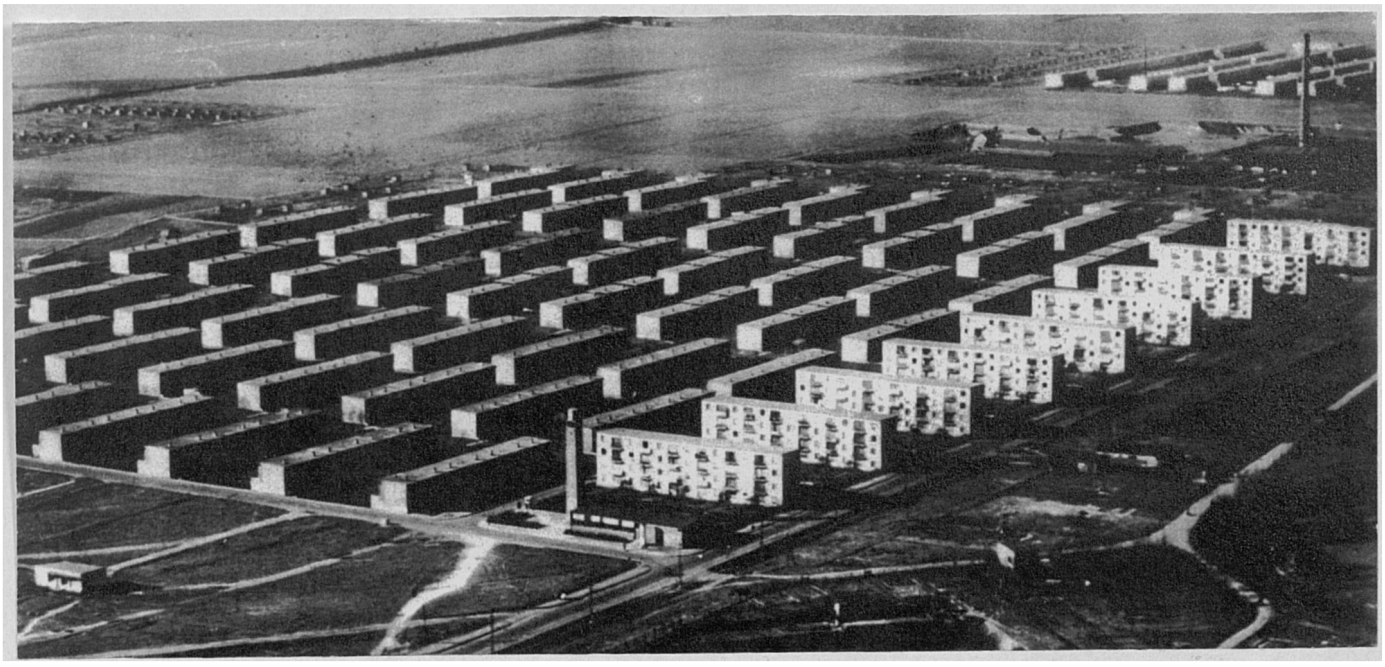
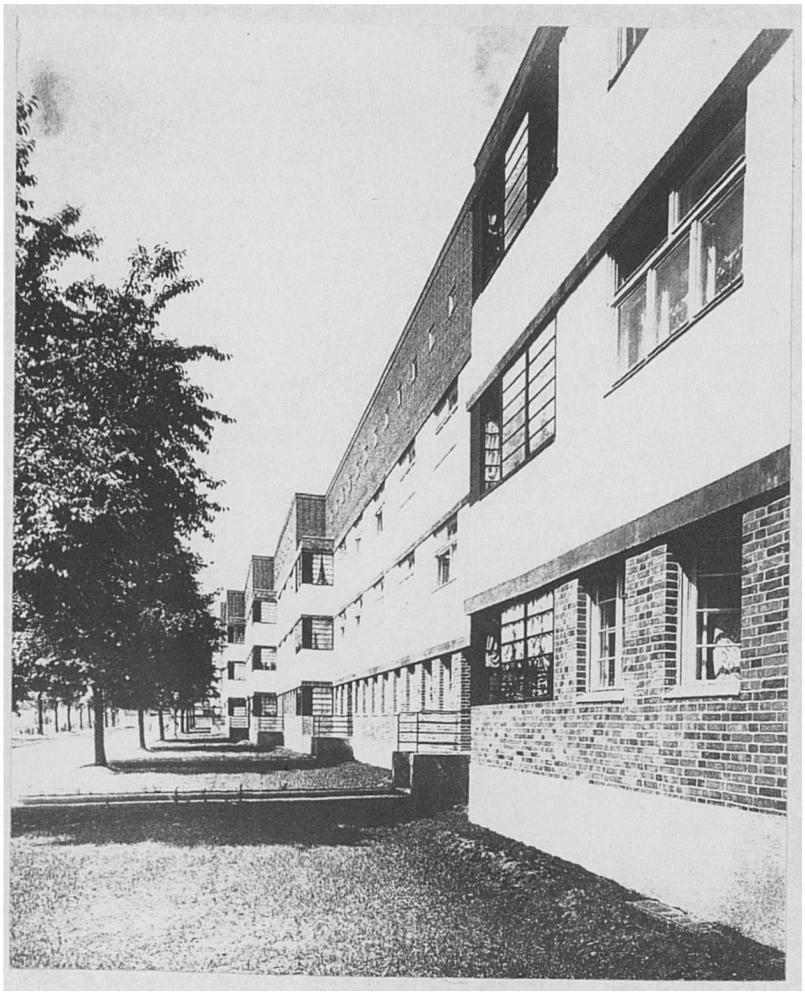
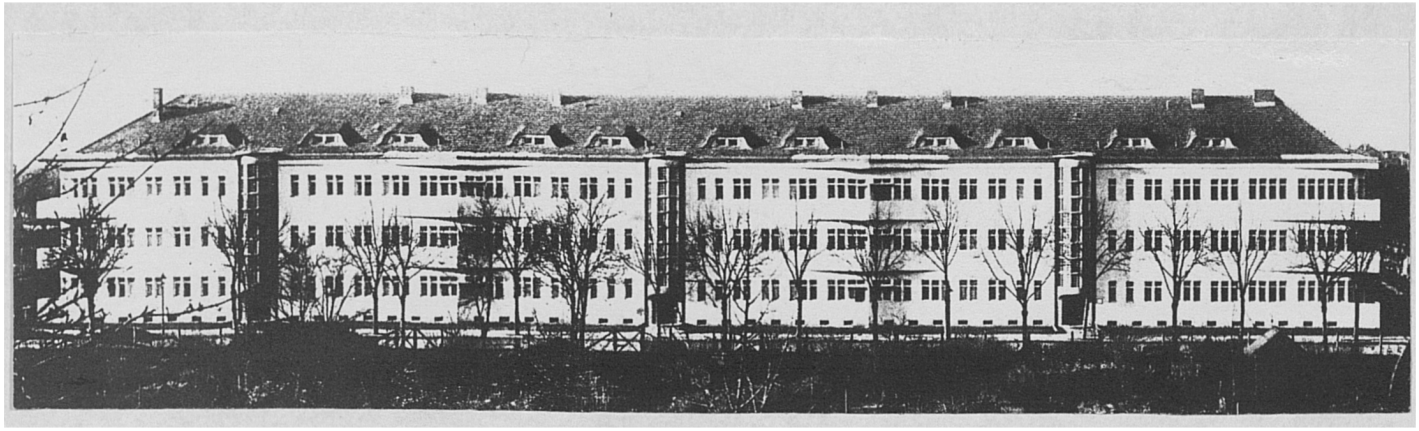
# PLATES



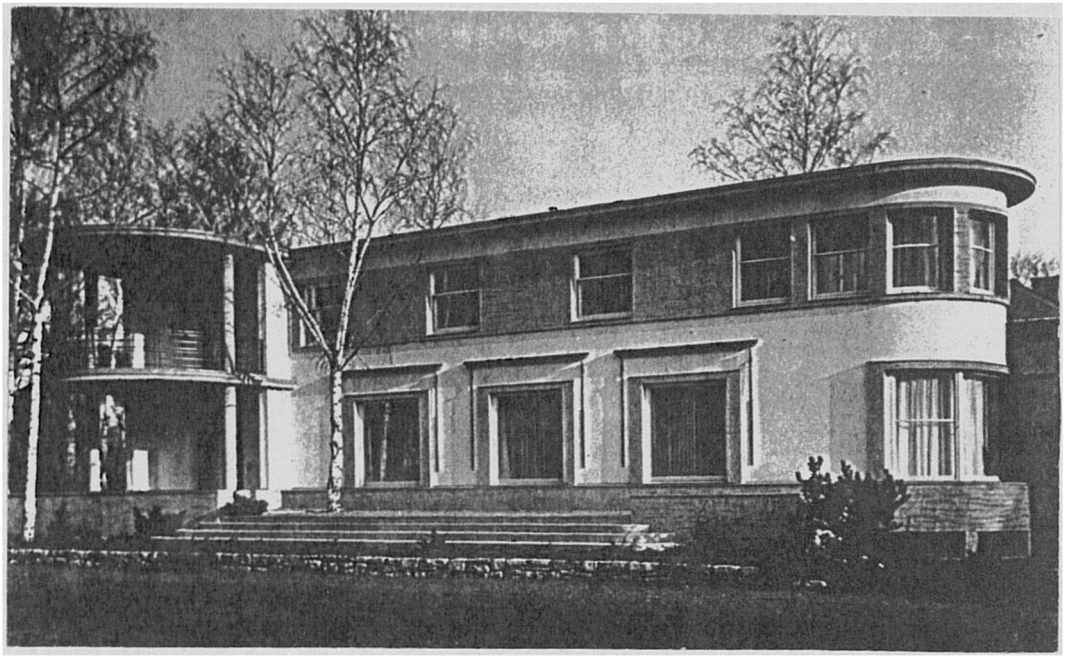



1. Walter Gropius, Bauhaus building, Dessau, 1926
2. Eugen Kaufmann, Siedlung Westhausen, Frankfurt, 1929-31

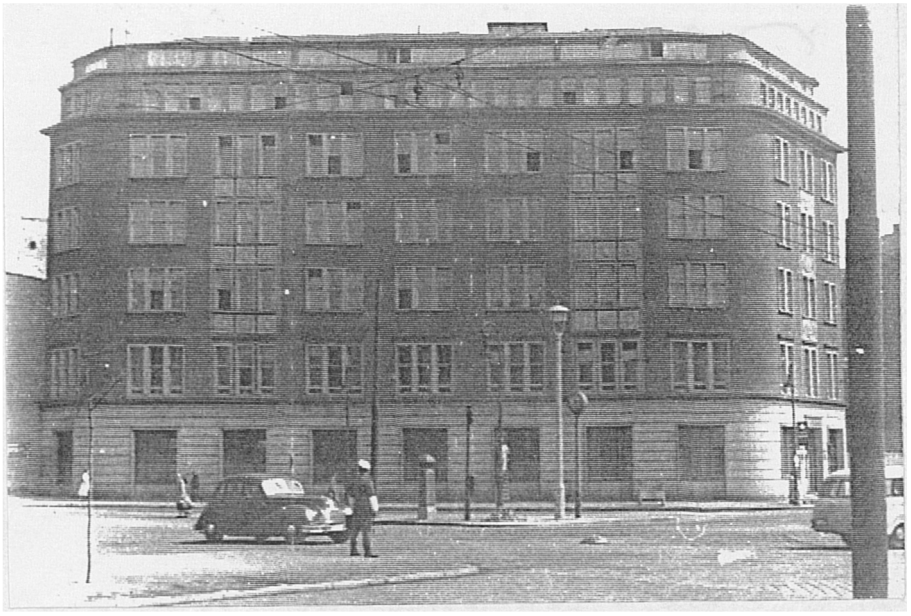




**3.** Erwin Gutkind, Siedlung Pfahlerblock, Berlin-Reinickendorf, 1927-29
**4.** Harry Rosenthal, Haus Salzbrunn, Berlin-Schmargendorf, 1929



**5.** Ernst Freud, country house for L. Scherk, Berlin-Lankwitz, c. 1930
**6.** Heinz Reifenberg, country house, Berlin-Grunewald, 1930

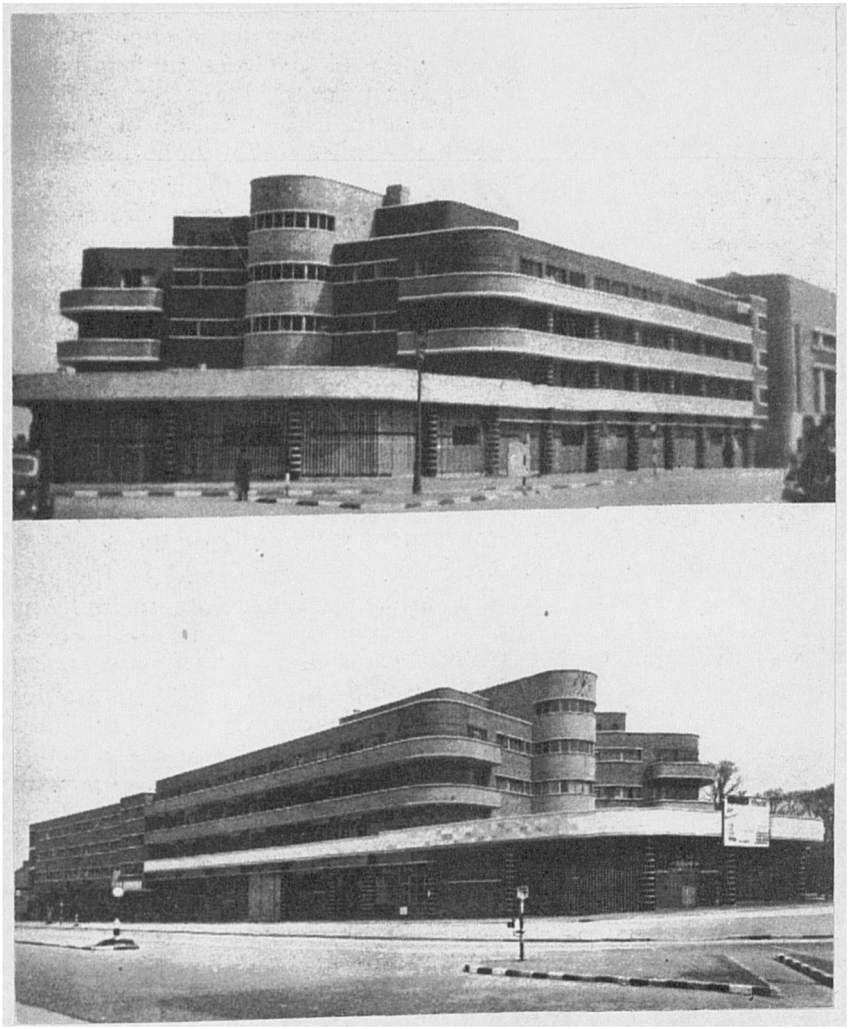



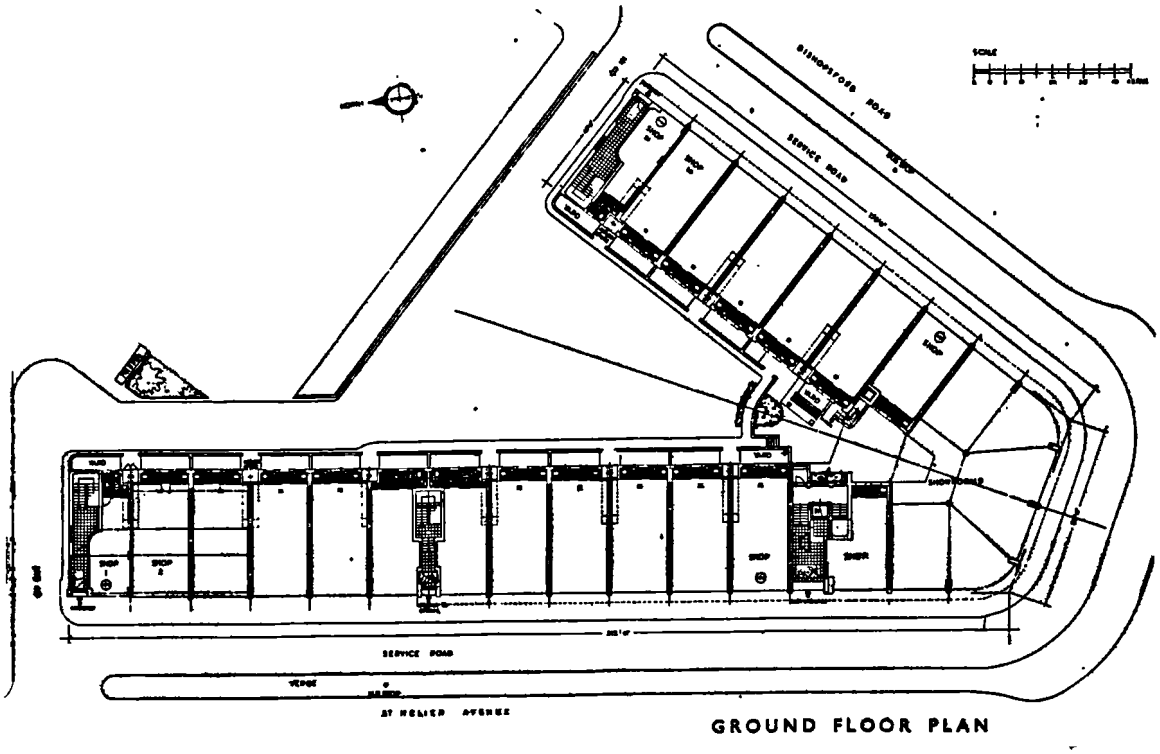
**7.** Hans Jaretzki, Osram house, Berlin

**a.** state in c. 1929, shortly after completion

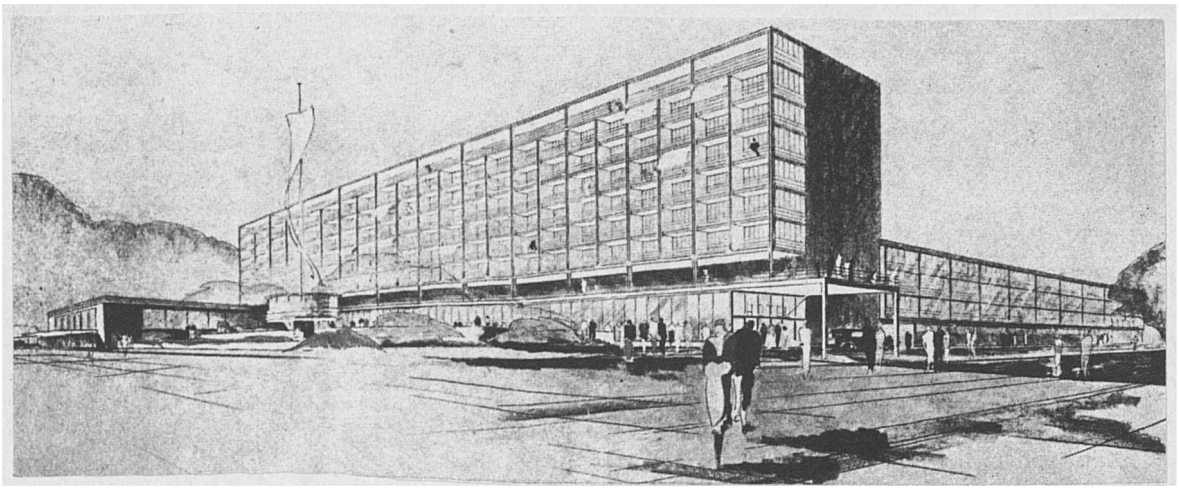
**b.** state shortly after war, blackened windows indicate burnt-out interior

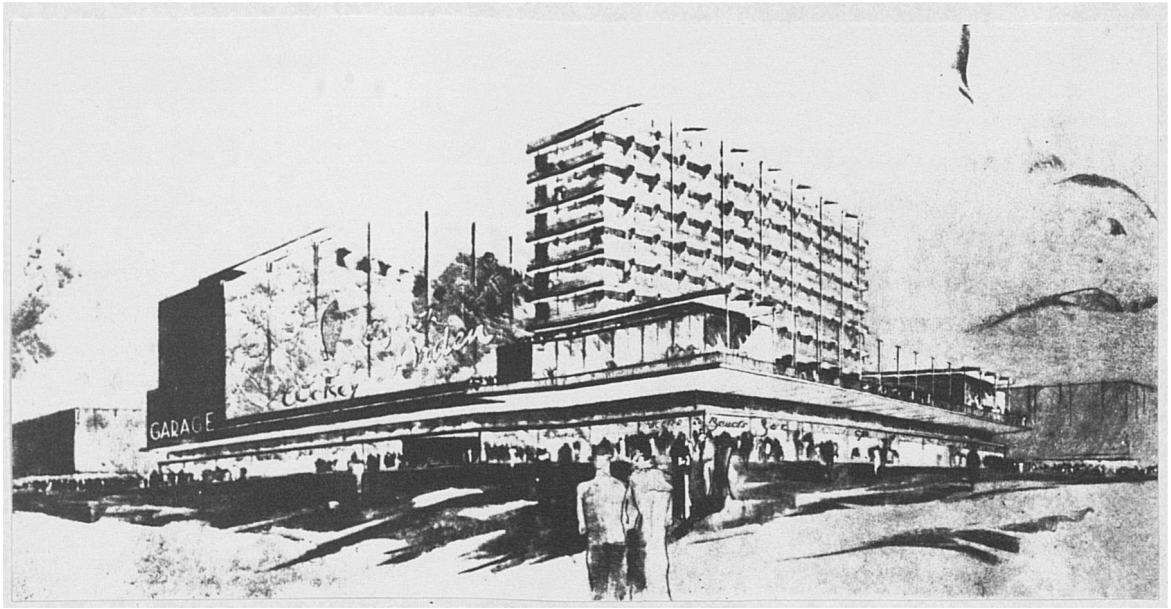
8. Walter Landauer (with Wills & Kaula), Willesden Green United Synagogue, London, 1936-38
9. Walter Landauer, North Western Reform Synagogue, Golders Green, London, 1935-36



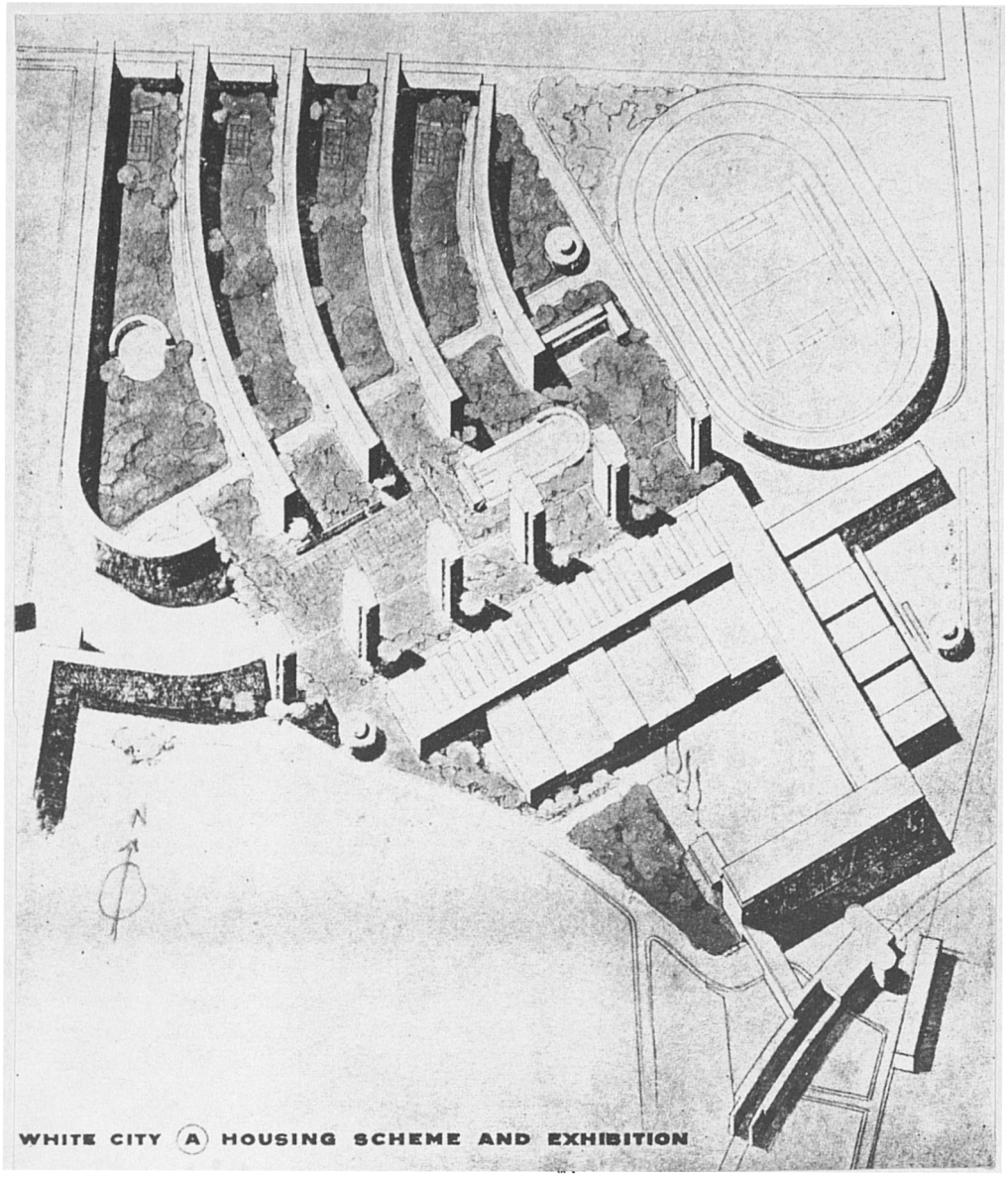


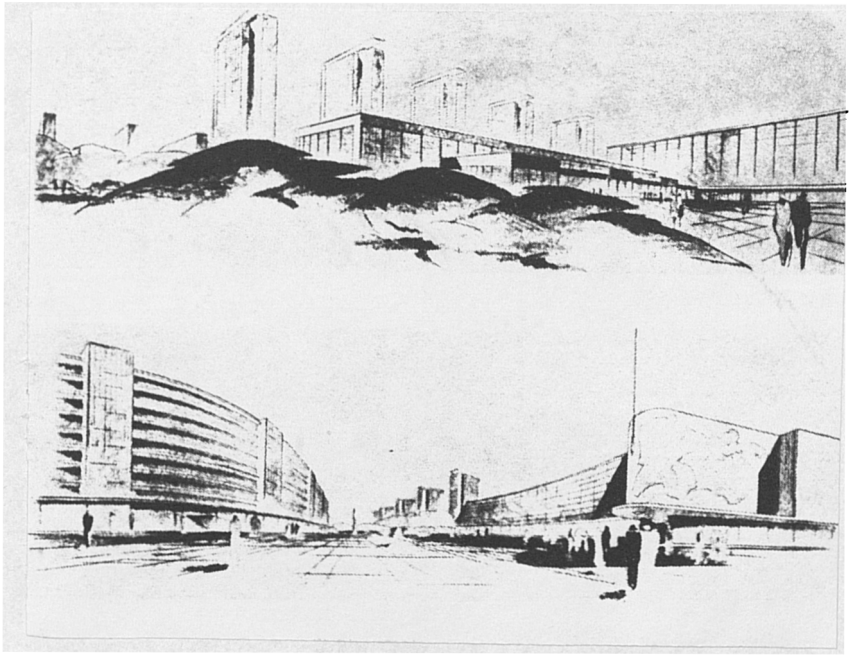

**10.** Rudolf Jelinek-Karl (with Weston), Rosehill Court, Carshalton, 1939-41
- **a. & b.** elevations
- **c.** ground floor plan





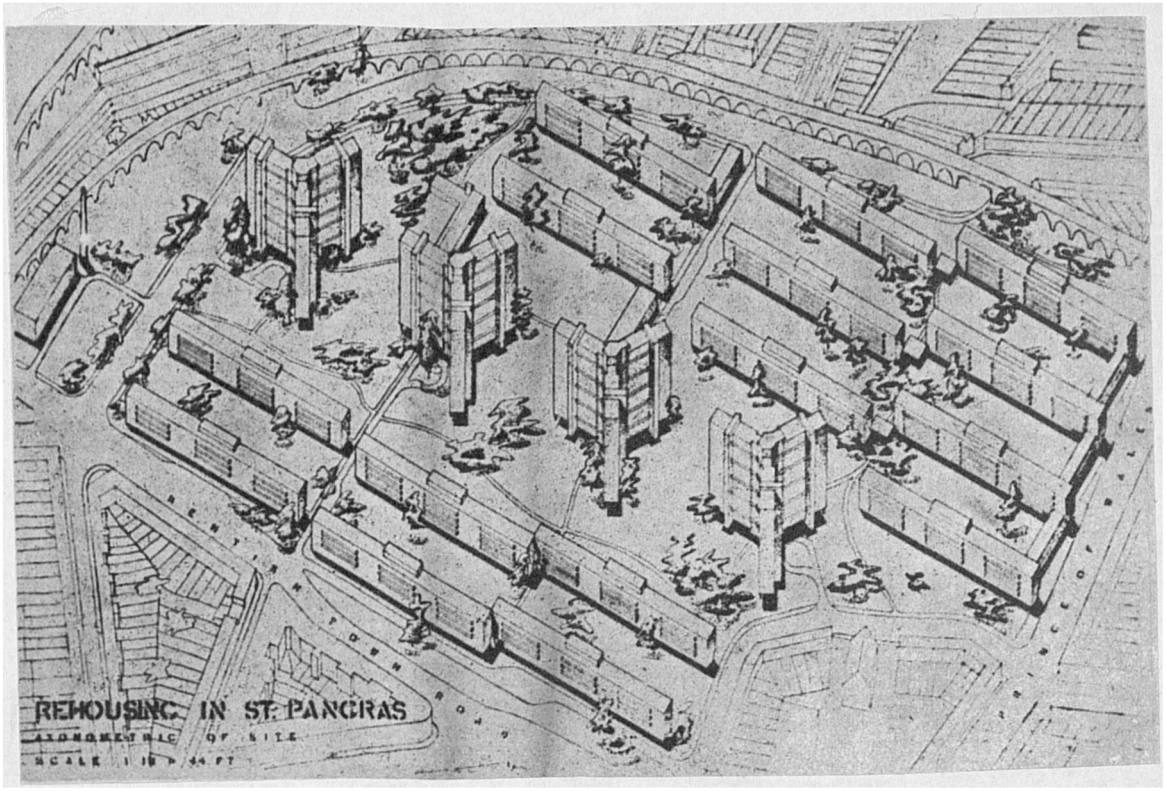

**11.** Erich Mendelsohn, hotel and medical baths, Southsea, 1935-36
**12.** Erich Mendelsohn, hotel and multi-storey garage, Blackpool, 1937

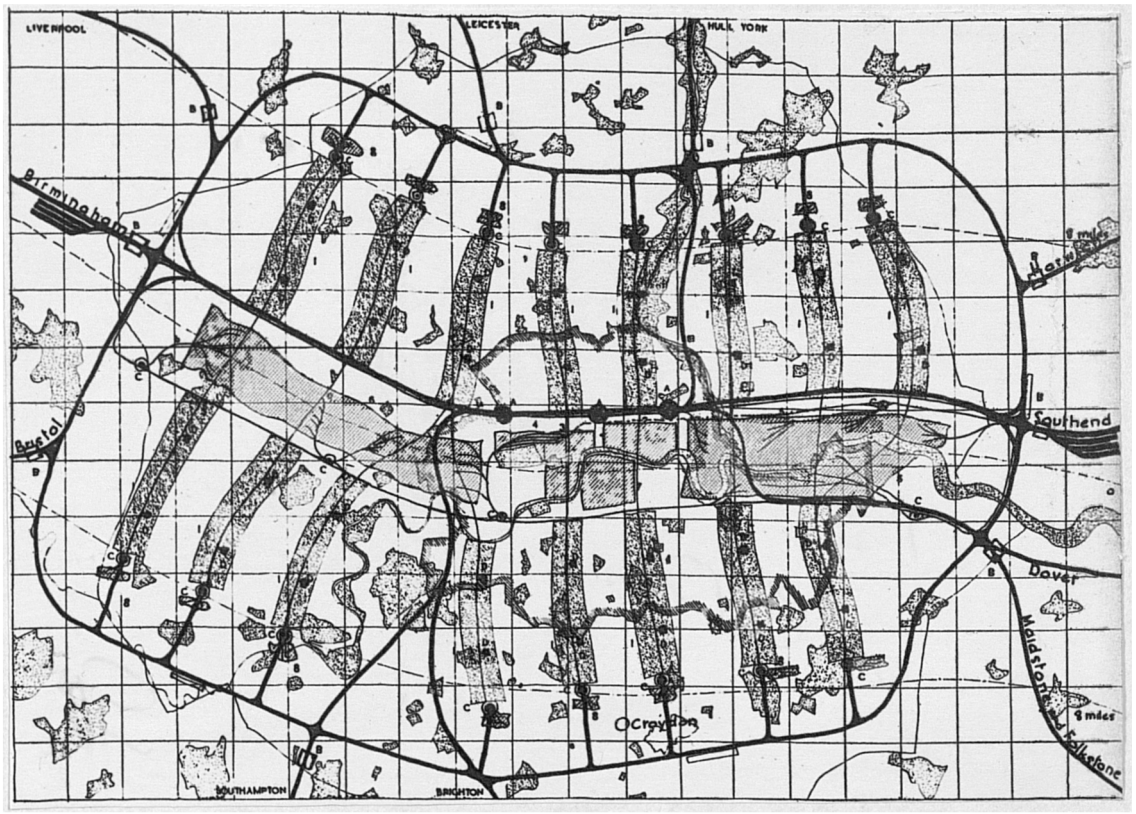


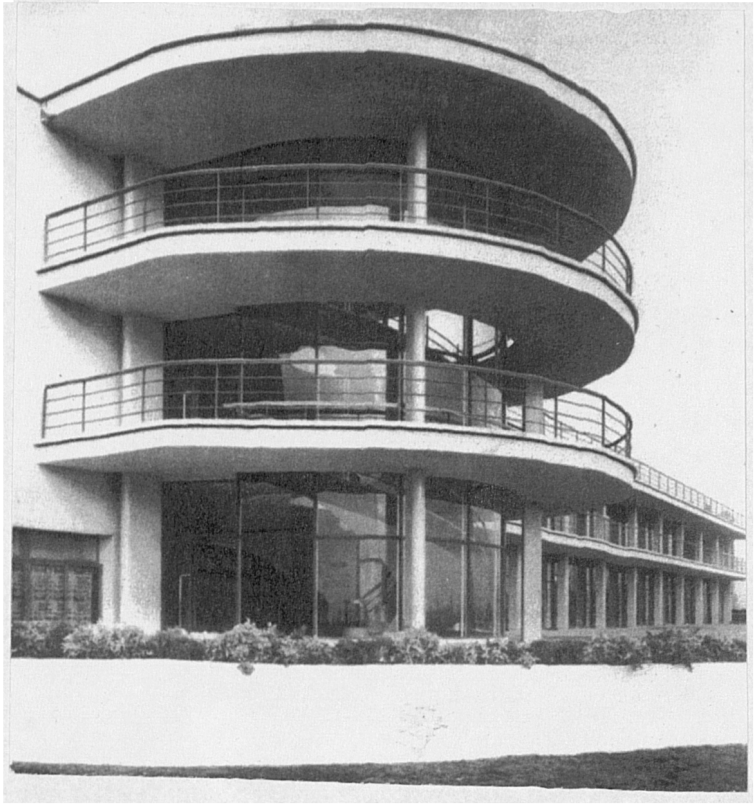
**13.** Erich Mendelsohn, White City scheme, London, 1935

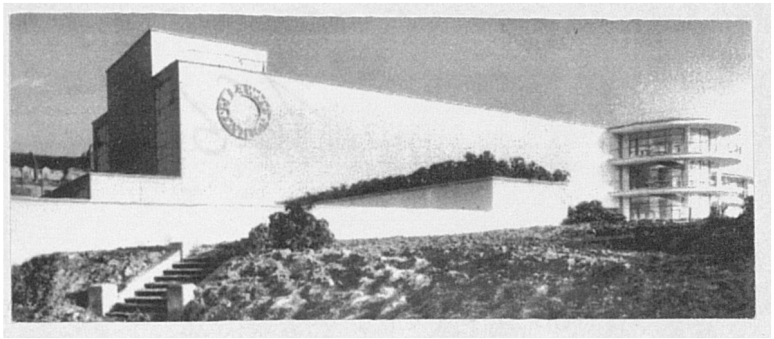
- **a.** Scheme A: housing and exhibition centre
- **b.** Scheme C: housing only, view of point blocks
- **c.** Scheme C: view from west, including cinema on right hand corner

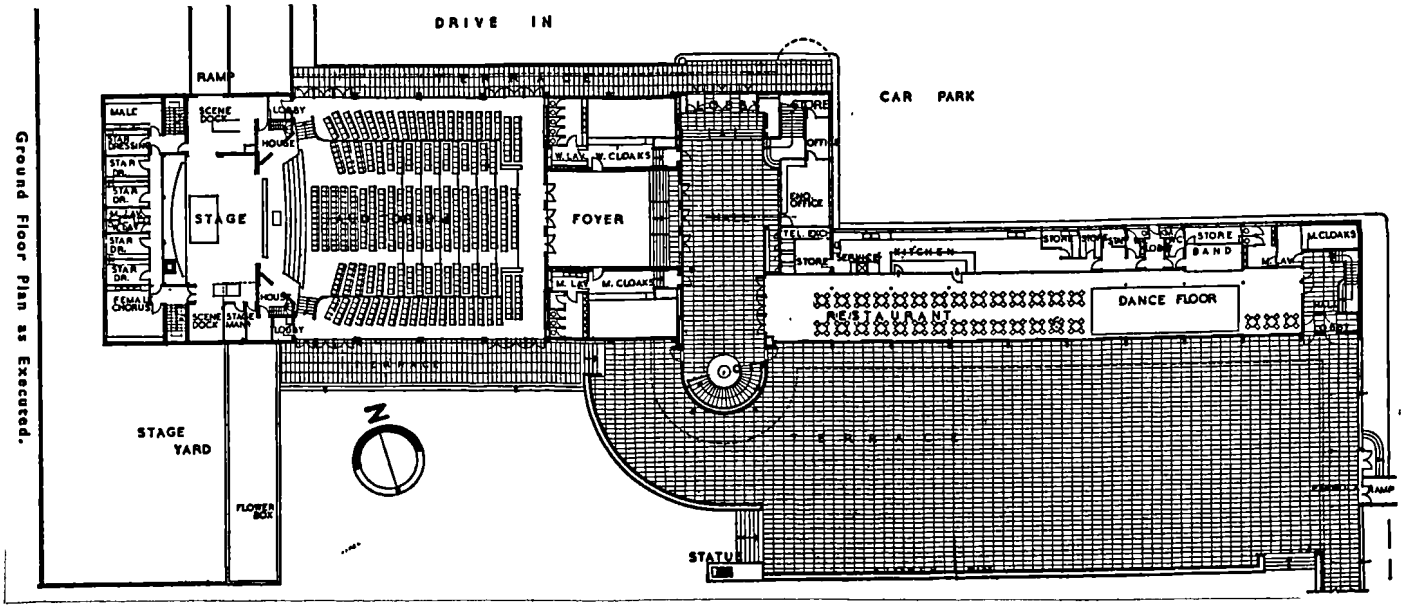



**14.** Eugen Kaufmann, redevelopment scheme, St. Pancras, London, 1936
**15.** Arthur Korn, Maxwell Fry et al., MARS plan for London, 1942





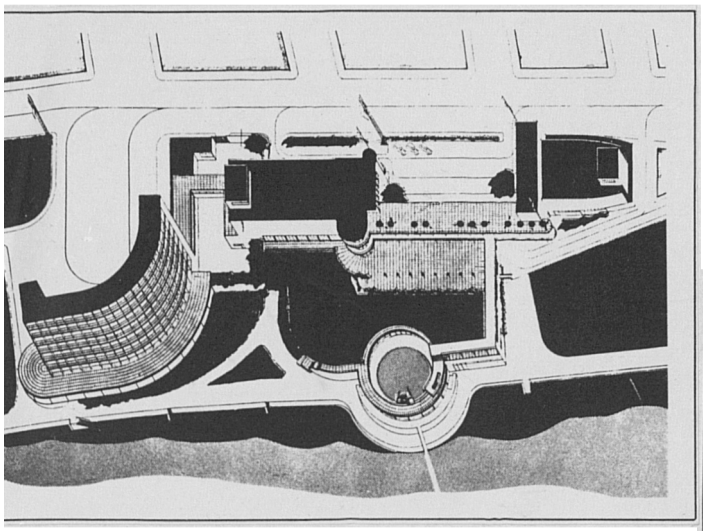


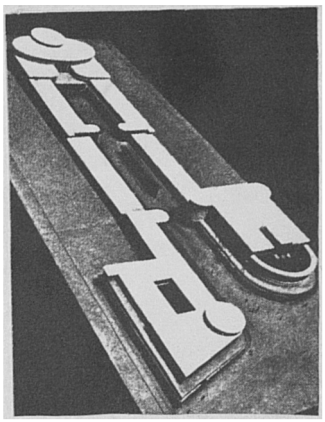

**16.** Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, 1933

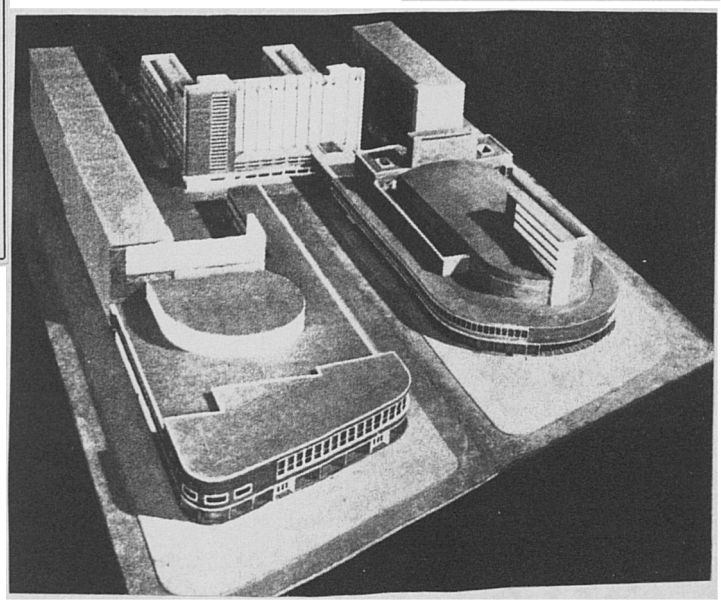
**a.** elevations, staircase and library wing, view from south

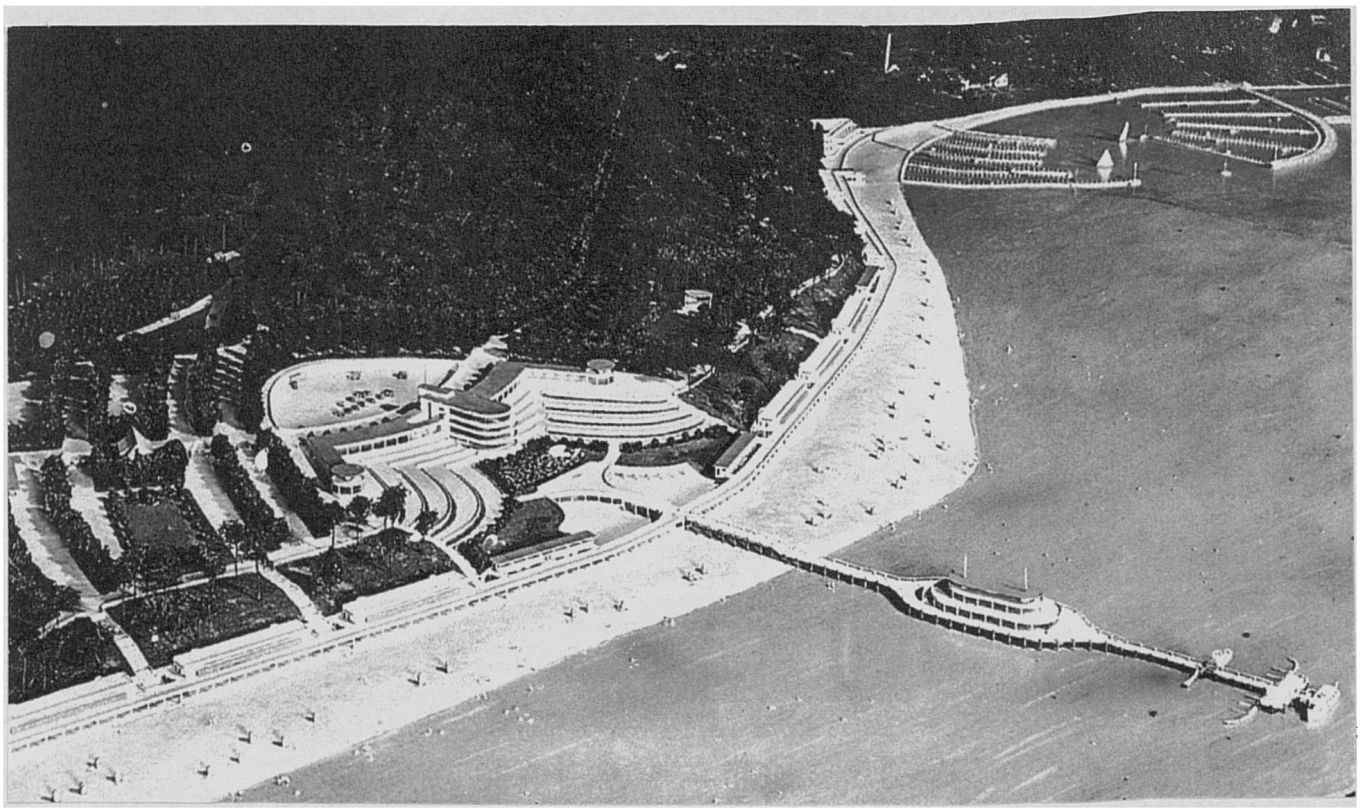
**b.** elevations, view from south, auditorium

**c.** ground floor plan as executed

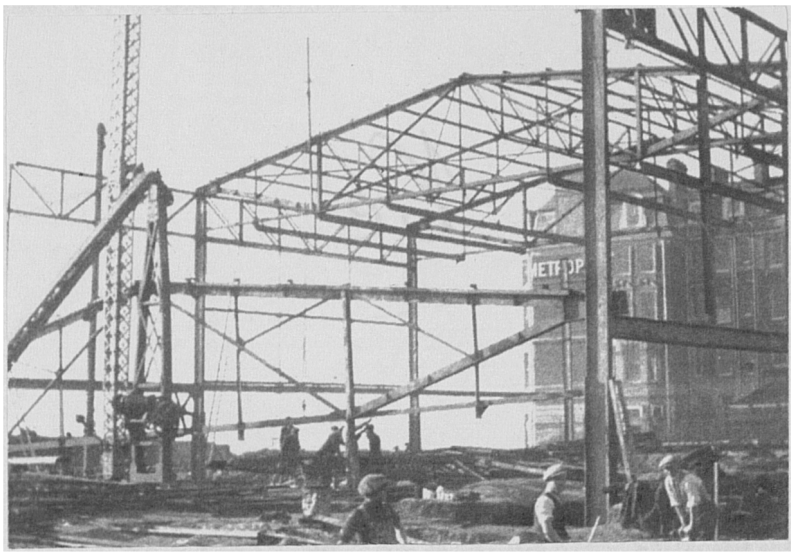


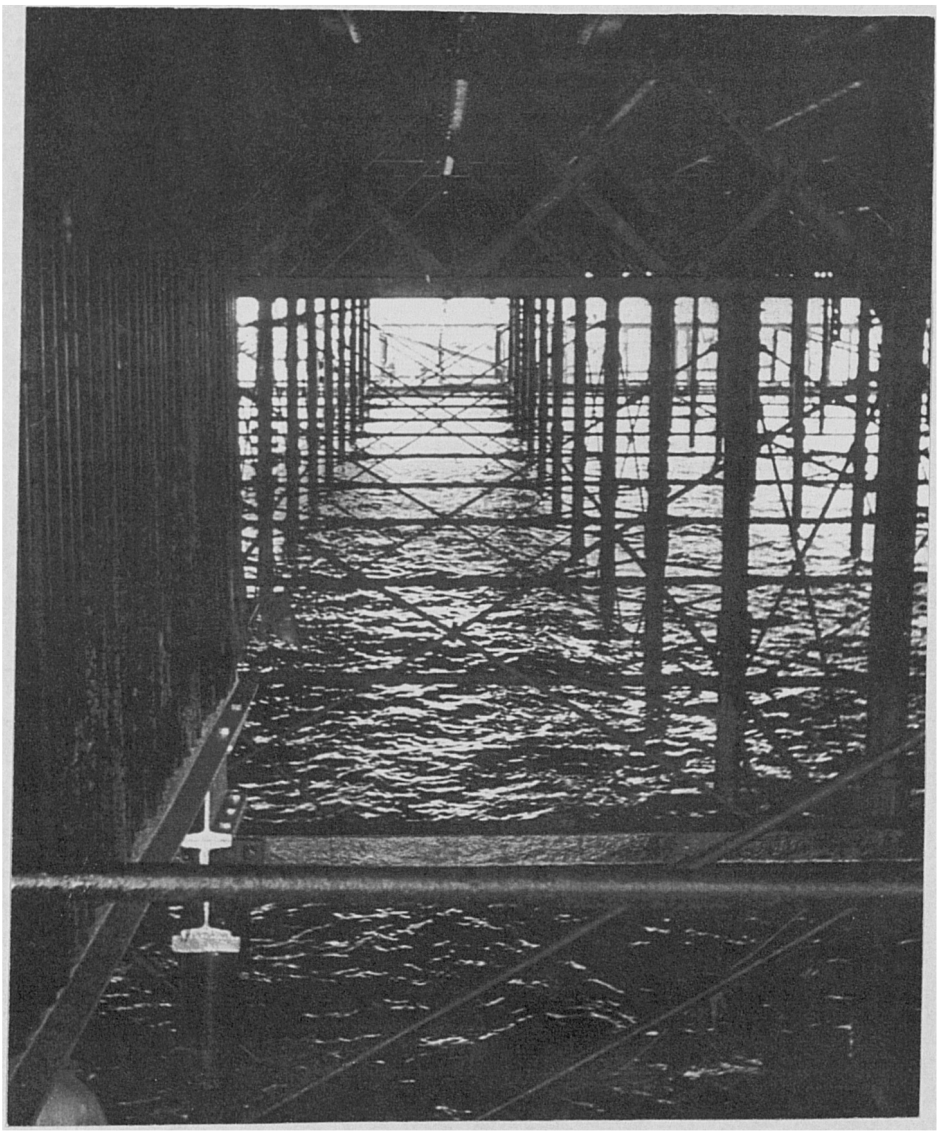




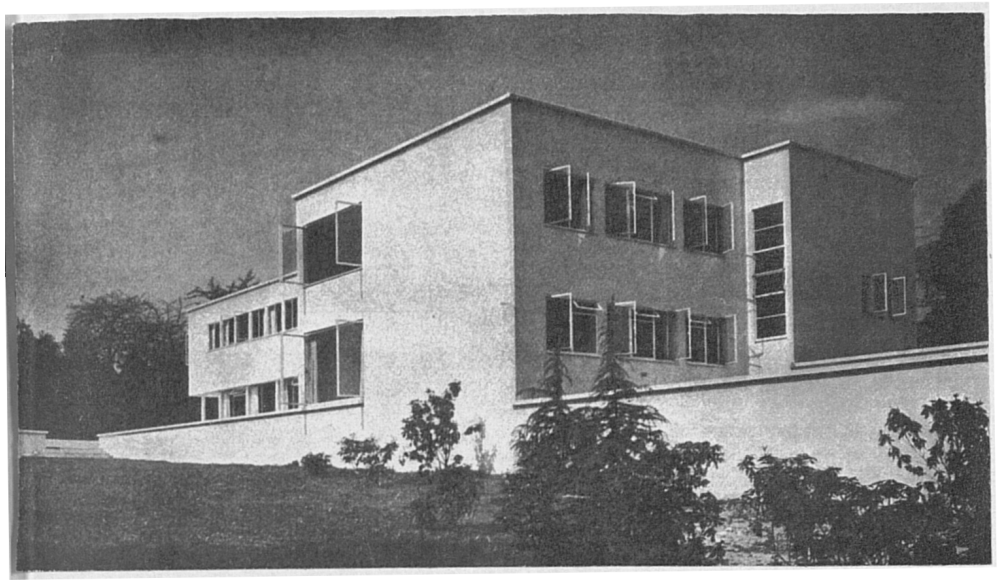


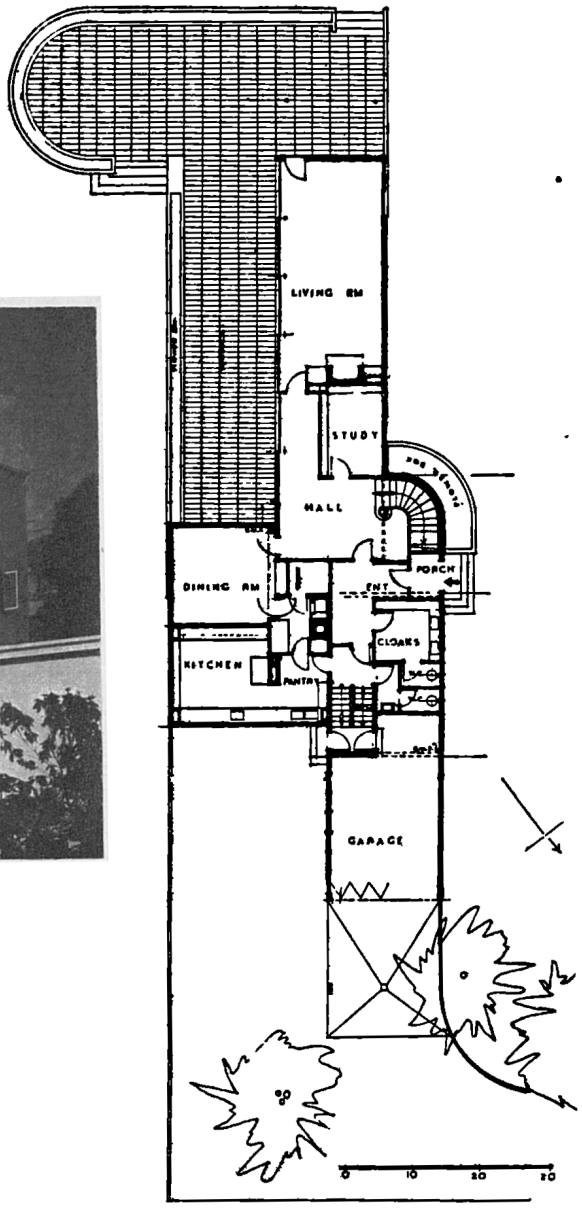
**16.** Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, 1933
**d.** (left) axonometric, showing planned extensions, incl. hotel and swimming pool
**17.** (right) Erich Mendelsohn, Woga complex, Berlin, 1928
**a.** (top) model of original scheme
**b.** (bottom) model of scheme as executed
**18.** Martin Wagner and Richard Ermisch, Strandbad Wannsee, Berlin, 1930



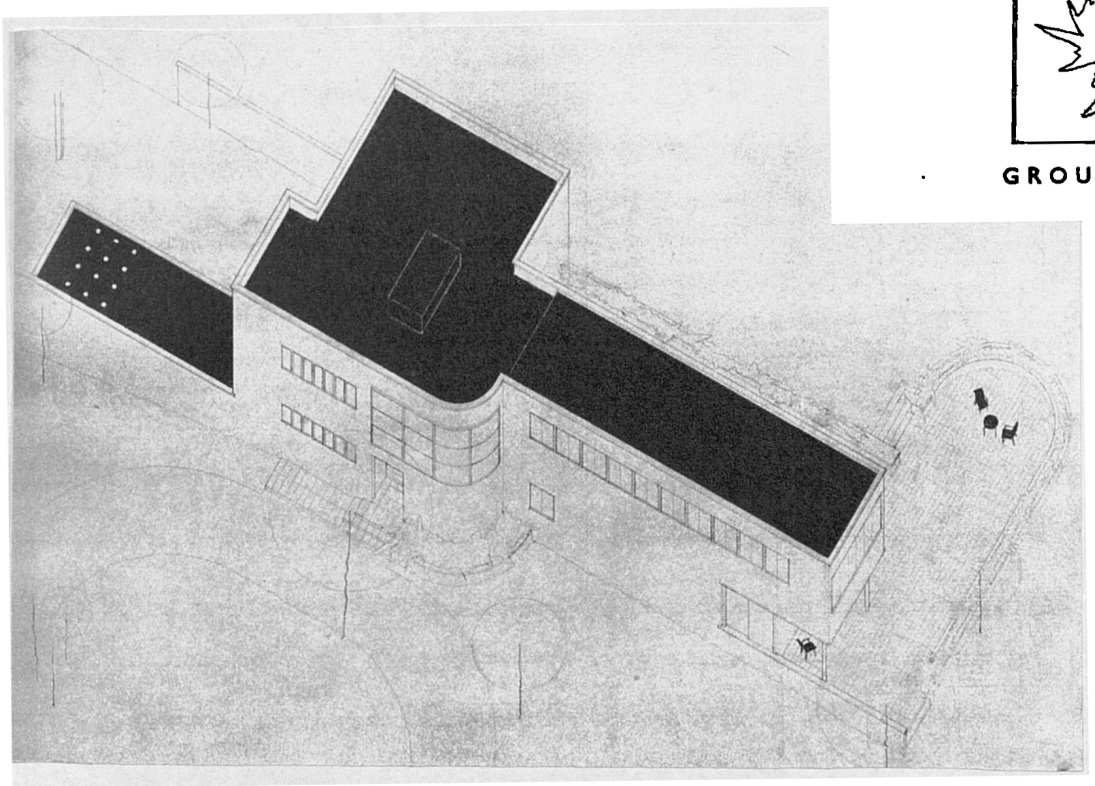


**16.** Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, 1933
**e.** steel frame under construction
**19.** steel construction of pier at Brighton






GROUND FLOOR PLAN

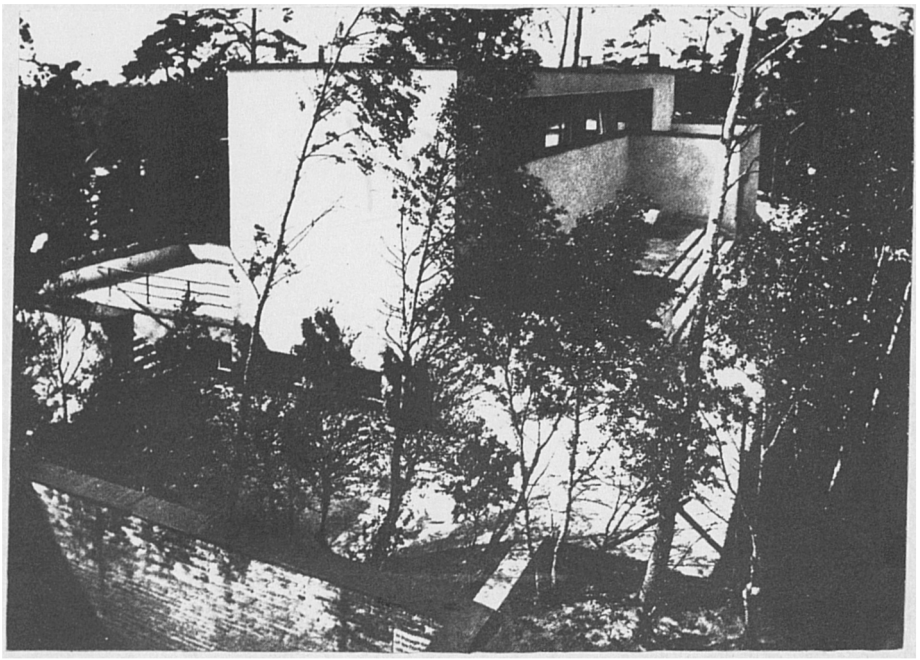


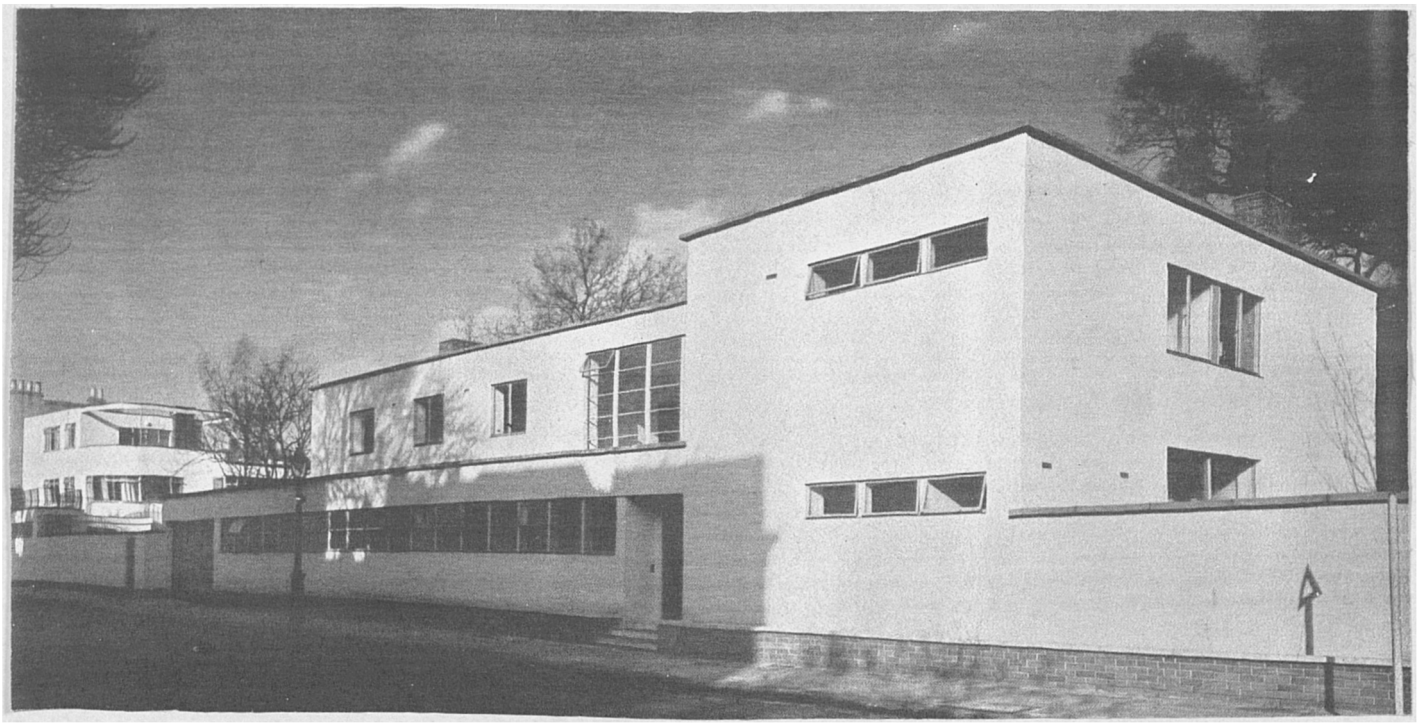
**20.** Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, Nimmo house ('Shrubs Wood'), Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire, 1933-5

**a.** elevations, entrance front

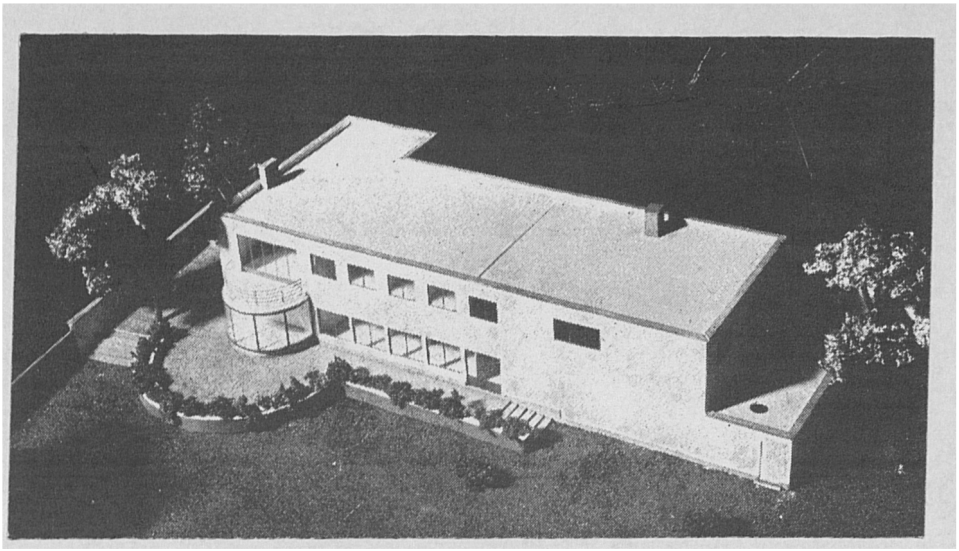
**b.** (right) ground floor plan

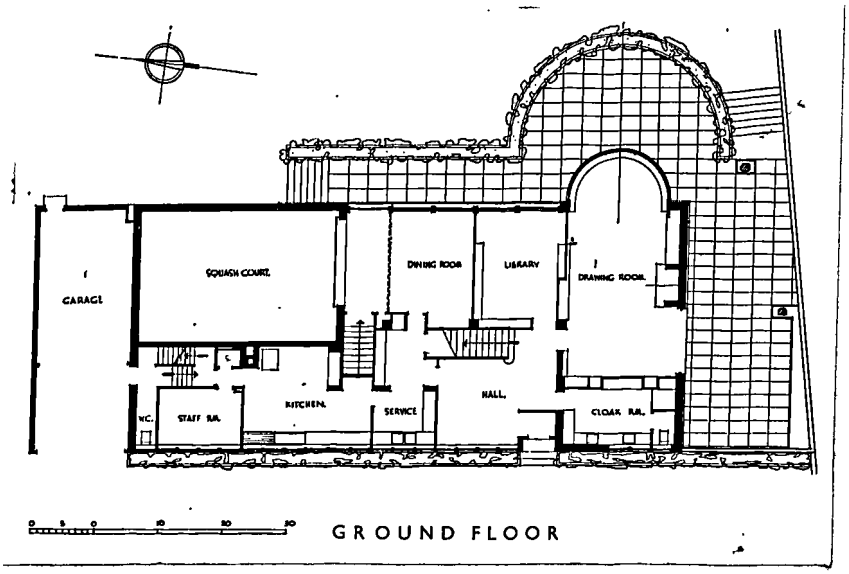
**c.** axonometric

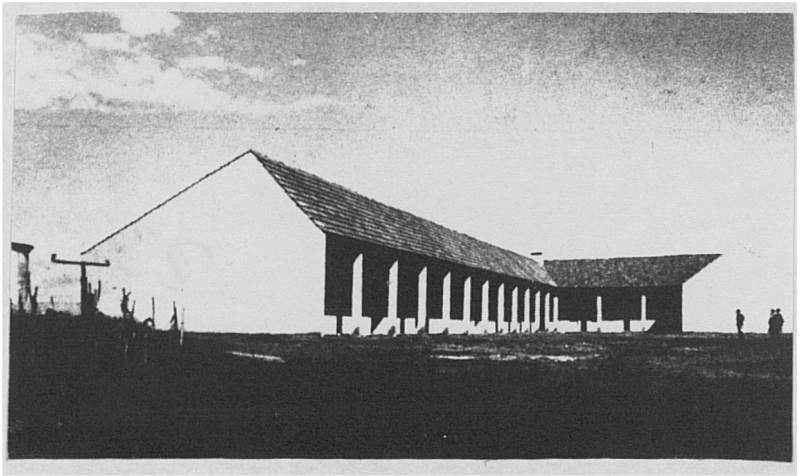




**21.** Erich Mendelsohn, architect's own house at Rupenhorn, Berlin, 1929
**22.** (foreground) Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, Cohen House, Old Church Street, London, 1935 and (background) Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, Levy House, 1935





**22.** (top and centre) Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, Cohen House, Old Church Street, London, 1935

**b.** (top) model, view from garden

**c.** (centre) ground floor plan

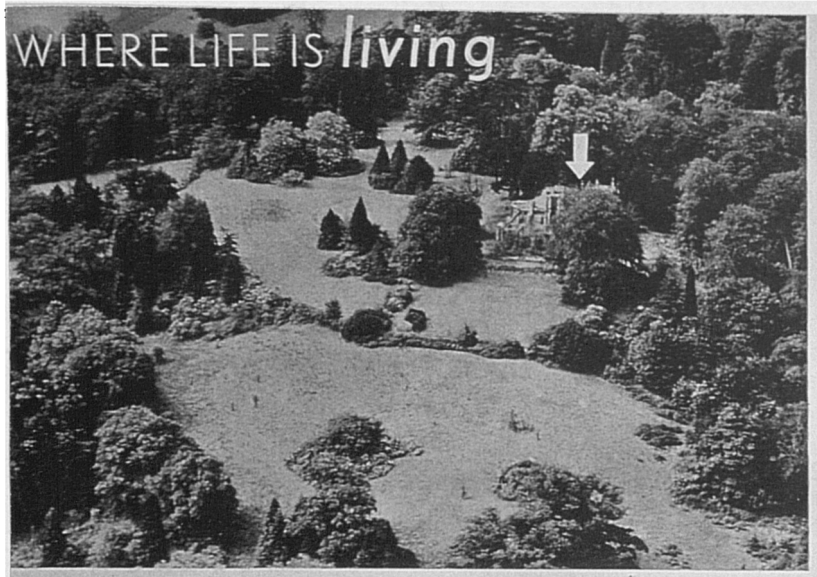
**23.** (bottom) Erich Mendelsohn, Agricultural College, Rehoboth, 1939

**24.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, luxury apartments, St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor, 1934-35
**a.** elevations

**24.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, luxury apartments, St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor, 1934-35

**b.** page from prospectus "Where Life is Living"

# WHERE LIFE IS *living*



Aerial view showing the beautifully timbered park at St. Leonard's Hill. The new flats will be built on the same site as the former mansion.

The proposed flats are designed in accordance with all the latest and established principles of modern architecture, by E. MAXWELL FRY, of Messrs. Adams, Thompson and Fry, the well-known authorities on town-planning, in collaboration with PROFESSOR WALTER GROPIUS, who is internationally known as an expert in domestic architecture designed for modern requirements. In all except the single-room flats the living-room and dining-room run through the building so as to get both morning and evening sun: the two rooms being designed so that they can be opened into one large room. Nearly all flats possess large balconies. The roof flats will have large roof gardens; all flats face south or south-east, none have only north rooms. The garages are placed out of earshot and sight of the main building.

## UNUSUAL SERVICES

Kitchens are fitted for a refrigerator and electric cooker, with completely fitted cupboards as fixtures. There is a special refuse disposal system. Express service lifts operate to each flat, direct to the flat kitchen. Bathrooms are completely equipped with built-in cabinets, and there are separate showers. Bedrooms have fitted cupboards and space for small storage. For large trunks, and other possessions, further storage space is provided, each compartment being under separate lock and key. Central heating is obtained from entirely smokeless and fumeless furnaces: and special arrangements have been made for electric radiators in each flat. A large log-fireplace is provided in the main lounge. Express smooth-running automatic passenger lifts operate to each floor. Each flat is equipped with an internal telephone system communicating to the service departments and the garage building, and also to the post office system. Special arrangements have been devised for wireless facilities so that adjacent flats are undisturbed.

## AMENITIES AT HAND —AND NEAR AT HAND

The St. Leonard's Hill Estate has its own tennis and squash courts, swimming pool and skittle alley. A secluded part of the park has been set aside for a nursery and play garden for children. Several excellent golf courses are close by, and superb riding country is easily reached by quiet lanes leading into Windsor Great Park. Windsor Castle and Eton College are about two miles away and there are many first rate preparatory schools in the neighbouring district. Ascot is only eight miles away.

In the main building there is a large lounge with cocktail bar, enquiry bureau, a small shop, and a restaurant that opens on to a terrace. There is a ballroom, with an area for dancing out of doors in warm weather. There is a barber's shop and small but completely equipped Turkish bath in the basement: a reading-room, with adjacent terrace, a library, facilities for private cinema exhibitions, and a darkroom. A private omnibus is at the disposal of all lease-holding tenants to convey them free to and from the principal trains. The garage, with ample space for private cars, and equipped for proper servicing, is close to the main building, and open day and night. Good stabling for horses will also be provided. A few special private gardens may be available to tenants at a small annual rent.

## CHOOSE NOW— IN ADVANCE OF CONSTRUCTION

Five different types of flat are planned in the first block, from type (*a*), with four rooms, down to type (*e*) with living-room, hall, bathroom and kitchen. Sixty-nine flats only are available, at varying rents, from £125 per annum. But an option may be obtained on any one of them now by payment of a guinea. All flats have a superb view, looking over Windsor Forest and the Royal Park, and all flats have the same general amenities, none can be overlooked from other flats, but some, in key positions, are superior to others.

## THE FIRST QUARTER IS RENT FREE

By paying a deposit of a guinea prospective tenants may reserve a flat in advance of construction. This enables them to obtain first choice of the best flats, and also entitles them to rent-free occupation for the first quarter. The first quarter's rent will be refunded at the end of the first year.

All deposits will be returned if the building is not completed by July 1st, 1936, or if the flat for which the deposit has been paid is not in accordance with the description of it.

In the experience of the Company this facility is greatly appreciated because it ensures the smooth-working of the service organisation at the outset, and enables tenants to select in advance the apartments, or flats, they prefer. Nearly fifty per cent. of the Lawn Road Flats at Hampstead—the Company's previous enterprise—were let before the commencement of building.

## INCLUSIVE RENTALS

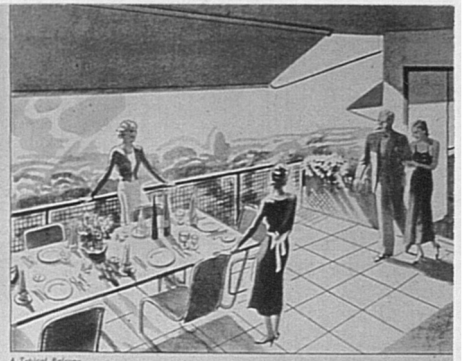
At St. Leonard's Hill the aim has been to provide all the amenities of living that are to be found in a really comfortable country house, with such services as will relieve you of the business of household management, at a price which is very much less than the cost of living in a country house of your own.

The flats are available on a minimum lease of three years. A limited number will be let furnished on monthly tenancies. *Rents* include central heating and constant hot water, window cleaning, porterage, telephone rental, use of public rooms, and the serving of meals in the flats at a small increase on restaurant prices. *Alternative rentals* include (*a*) complete housemaid service, dusting, bed-making, shoe-cleaning, etc.; or (*b*) full hotel service, including valeting.

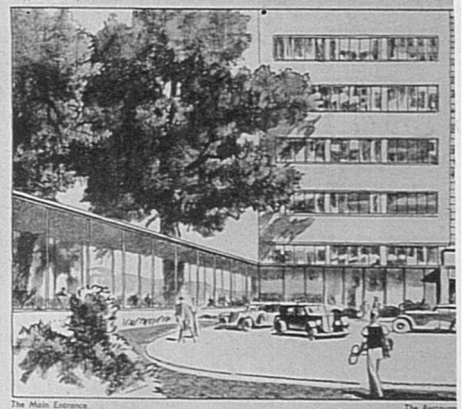
## WRITE TO THE LETTING OFFICE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The St. Leonard's Hill flats have been designed for those who care for the country, whose manner of living is intelligent, and whose social standards are high. They represent a new housing method—a method which allows people to live a modern life within a landscape preserved for their pleasure. This is the housing method of the future. Enclosed is an article, *Cry stop to Havoc*, reprinted from the *Architectural Review*, which explains the system in more detail.

St. Leonard's Hill is admirably served by the Southern Railway, from Waterloo, and the Great Western Railway, from Paddington. During business hours there are six trains an hour to London: three trains an hour at other times. Subject to the railway companies' alterations.

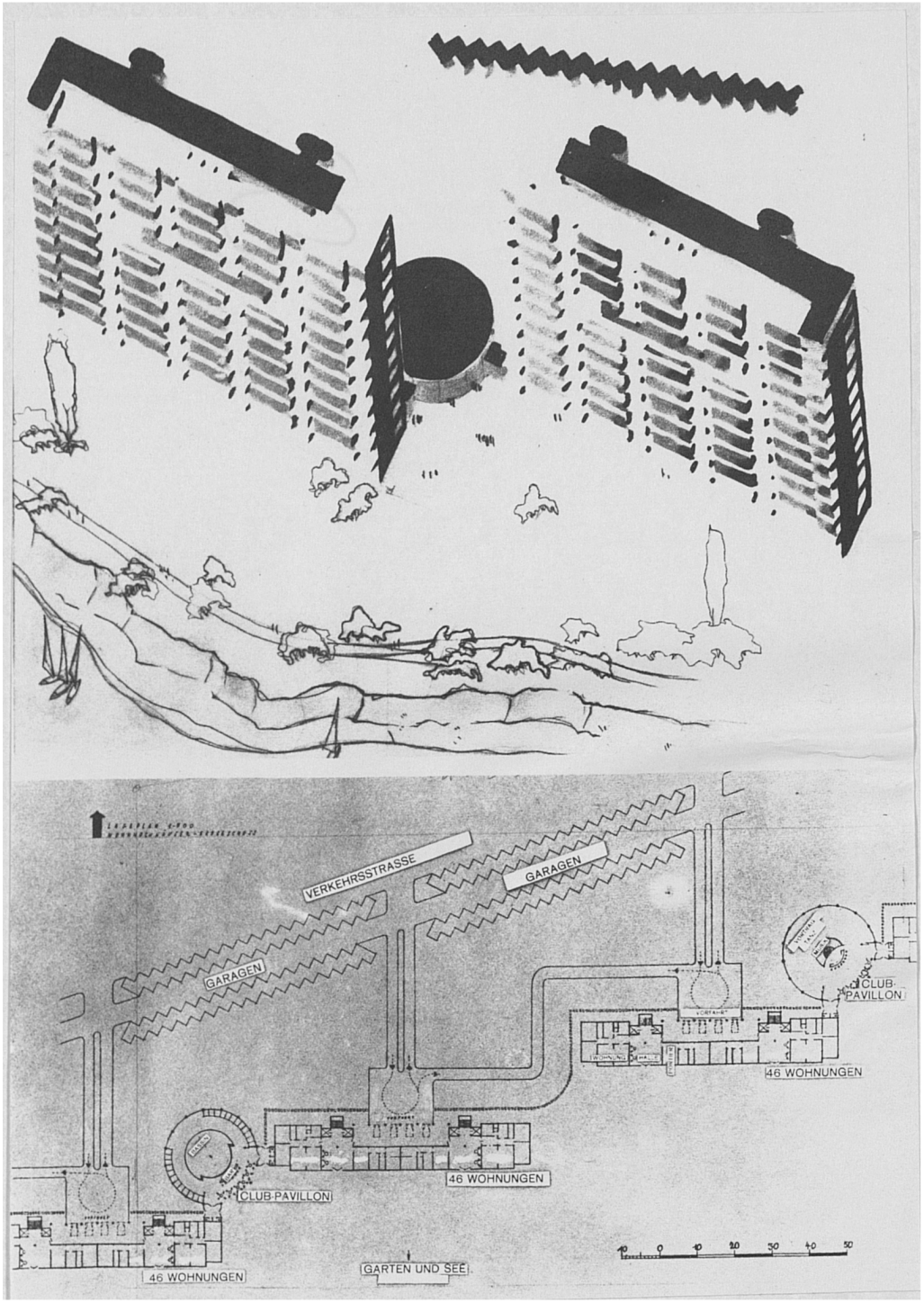


A Typical Balcony

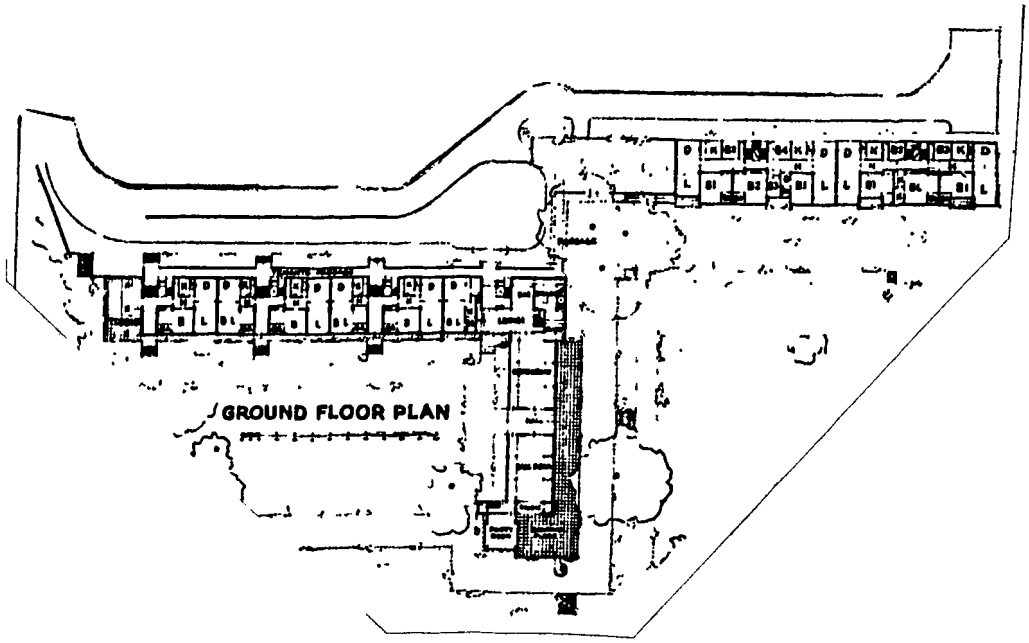


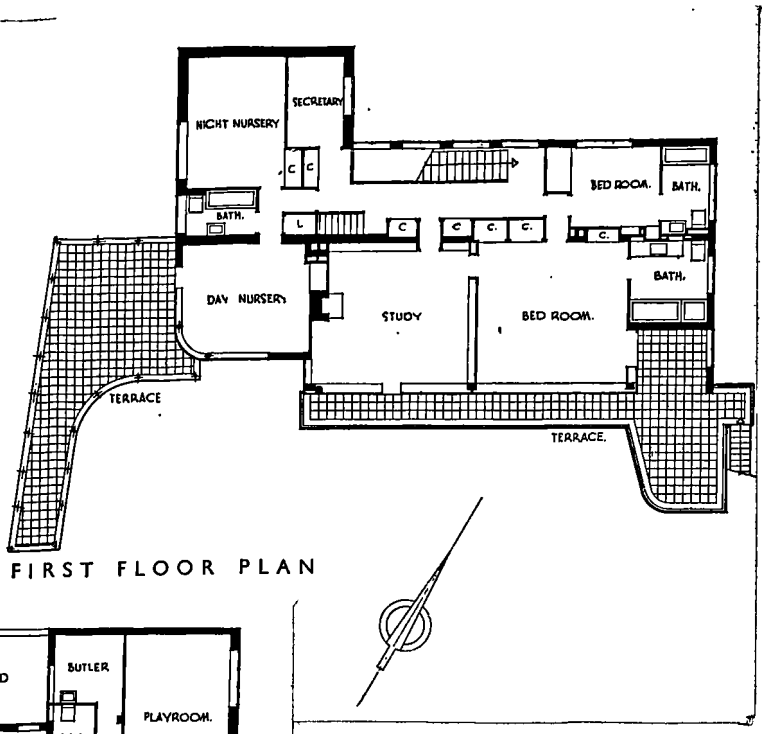
The Main Entrance

The Restaurant

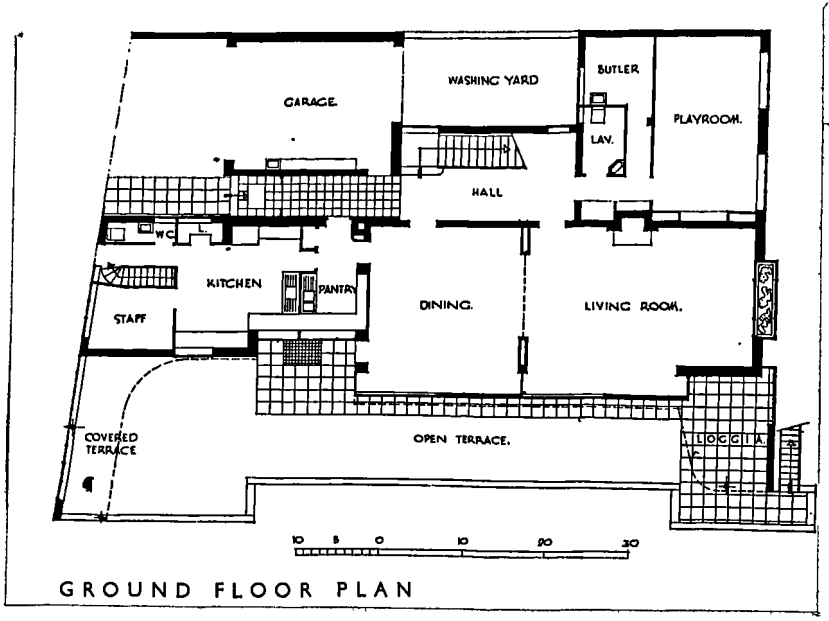



**25.** Walter Gropius, luxury flats, Wannsee shores, Berlin, 1930-31



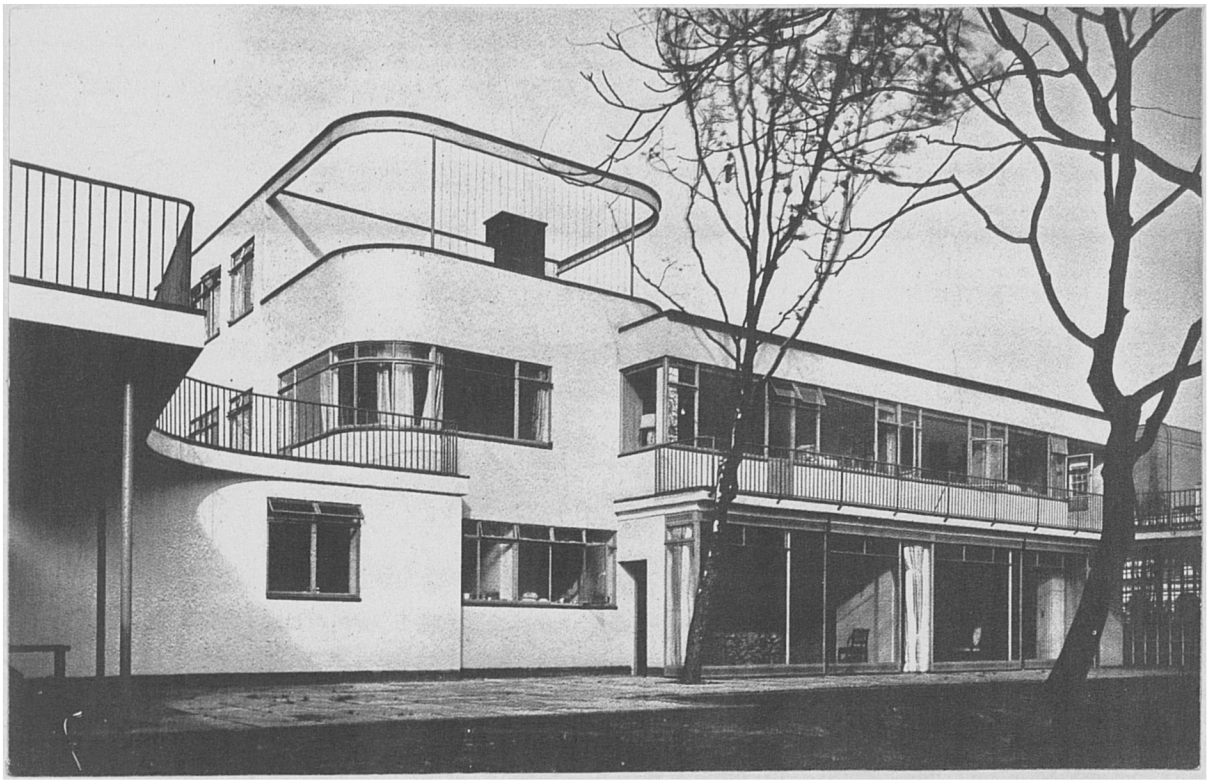



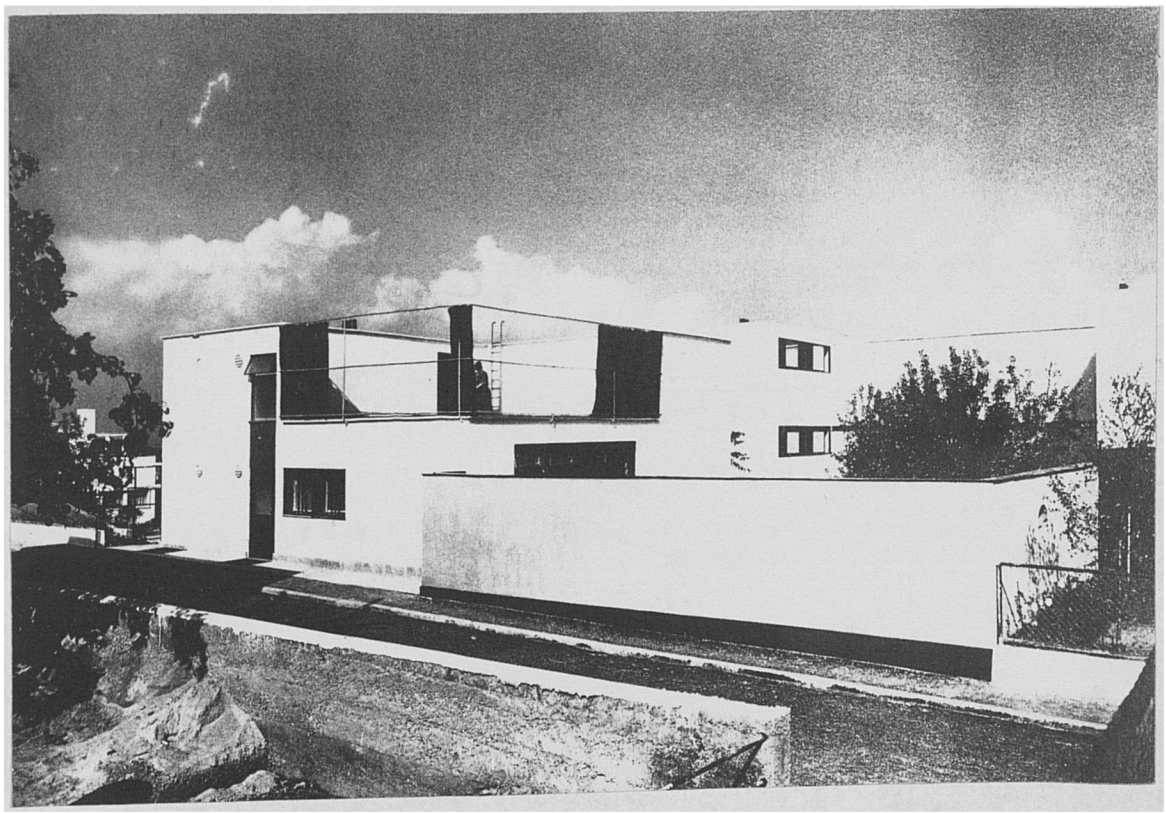

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



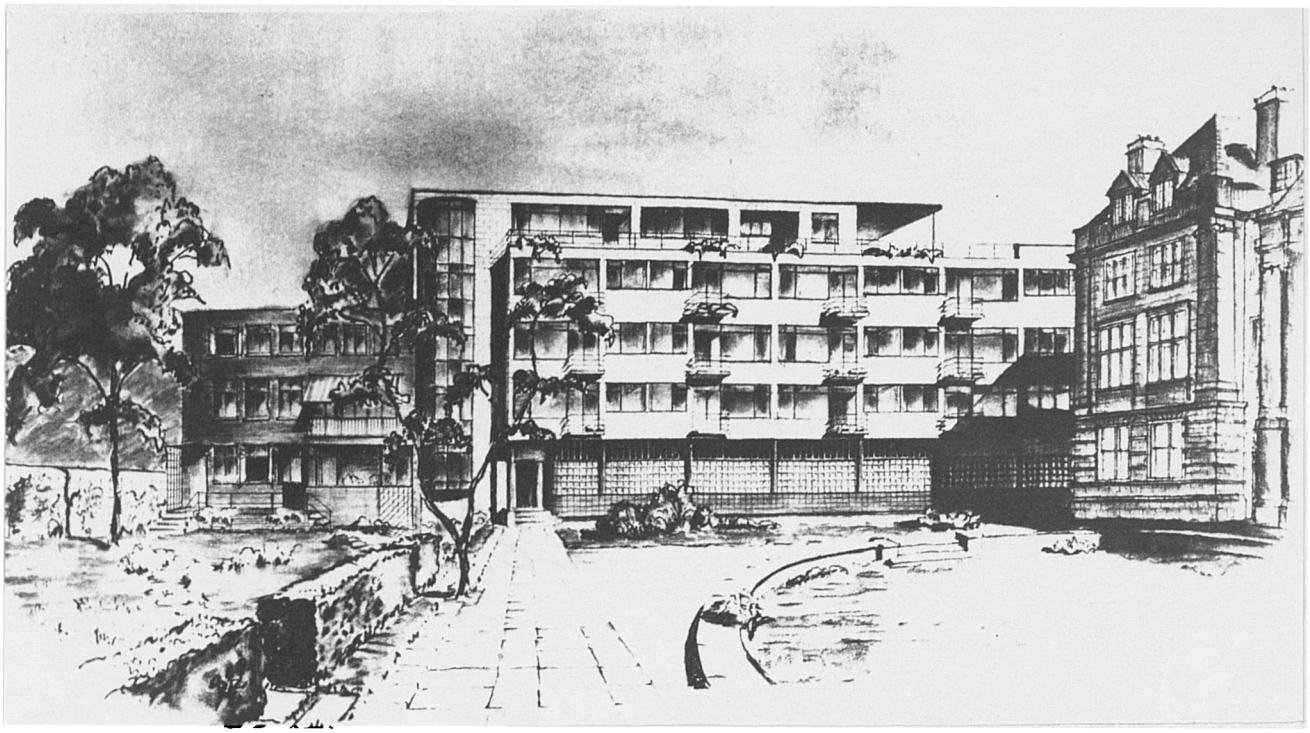

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

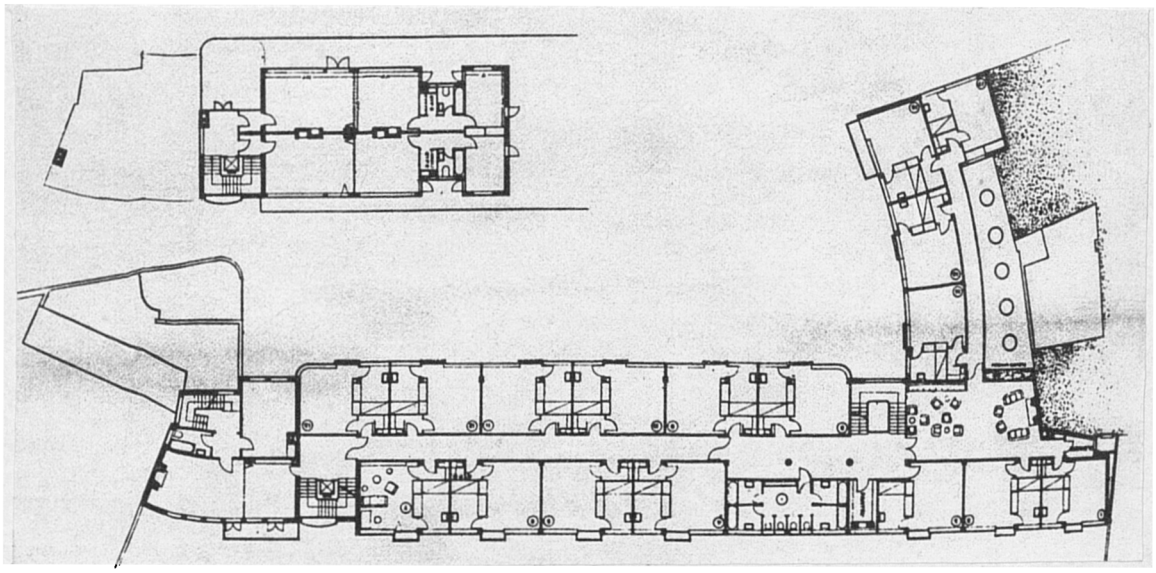
**24.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, luxury apartments, St. Leonard's Hill, Windsor, 1934-35
**c.** ground floor plans
**26.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, Cohen House, Old Church Street, London, 1935
**a.** plans





**26.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, Cohen House, Old Church Street, London, 1935
***b.*** elevations, garden façade
**27.** Walter Gropius, house at Weissenhofsiedlung, Stuttgart, 1927

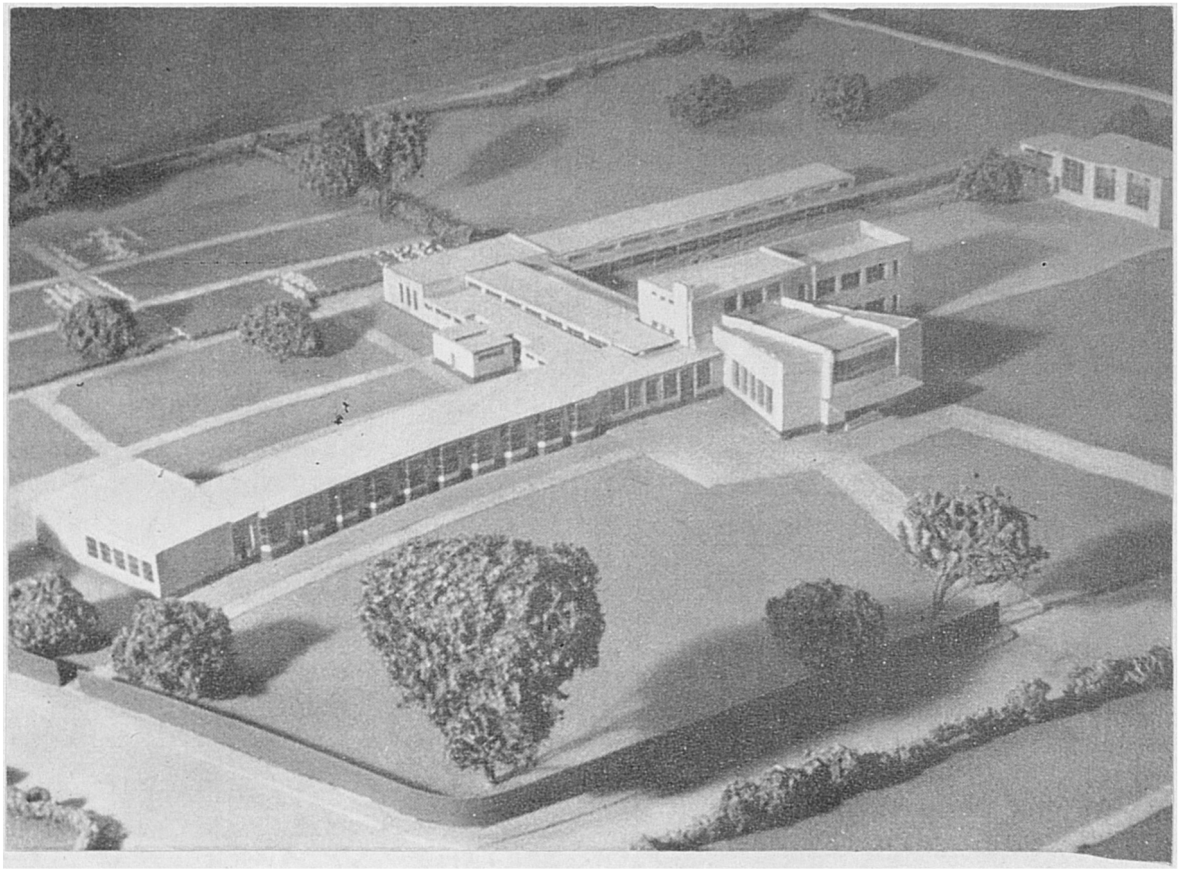


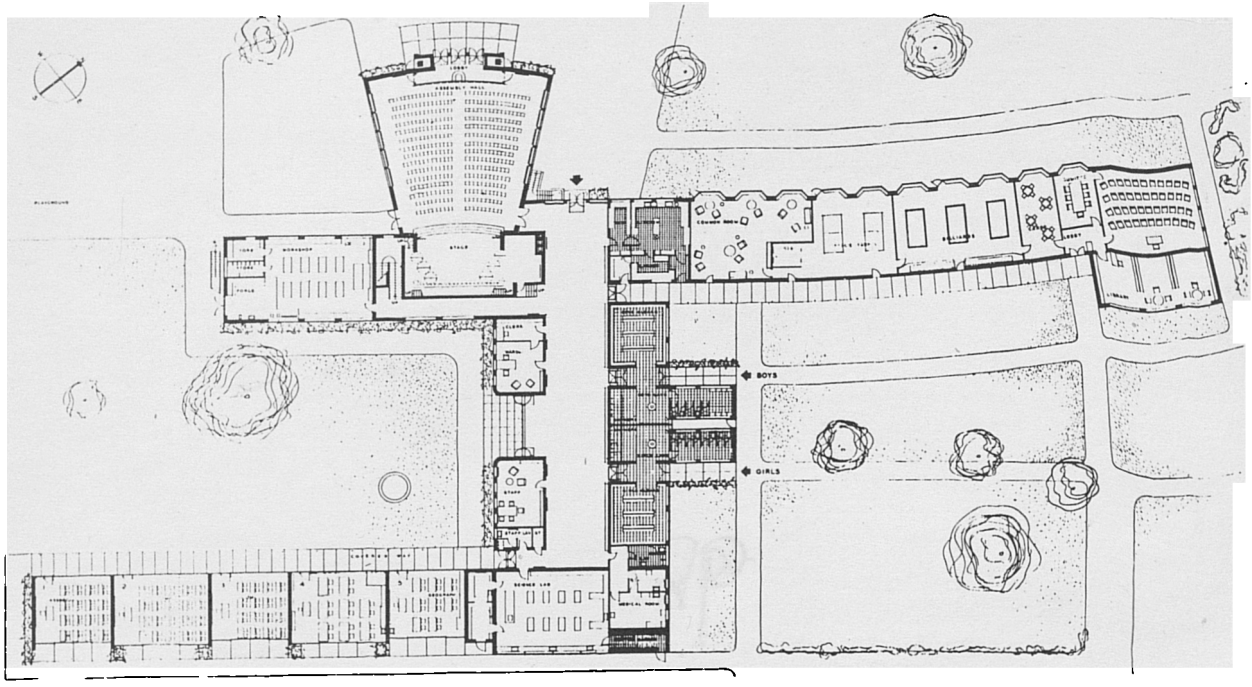


**28.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, student dormitories, Christ's College, Cambridge, 1935-6

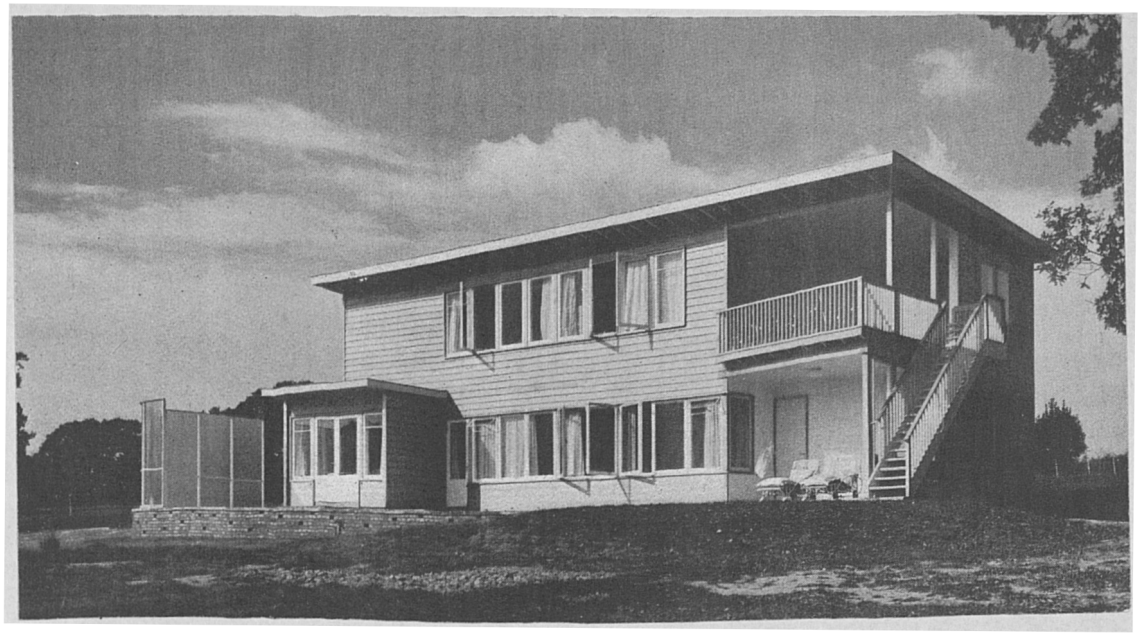
**a.** elevations

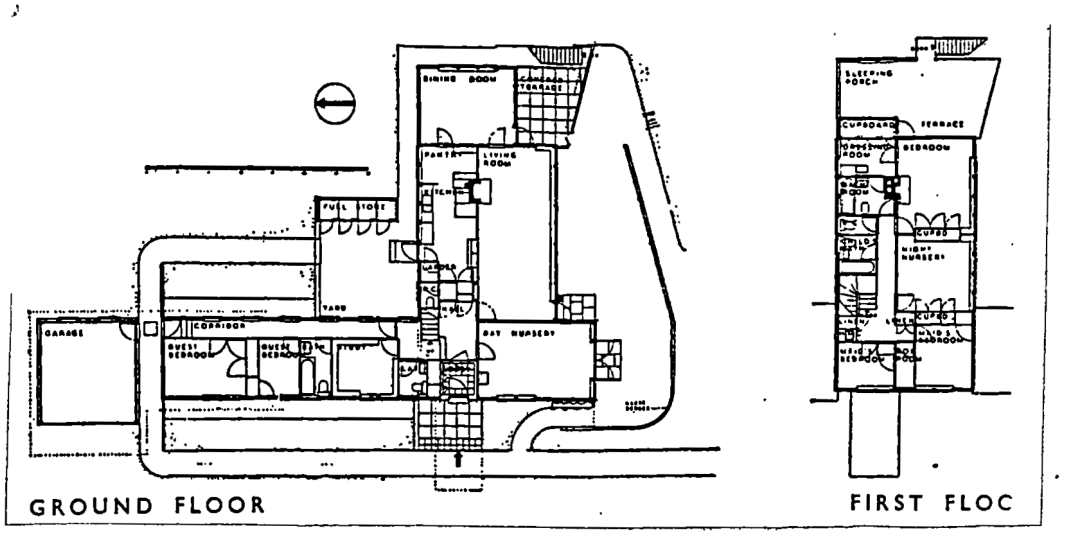
**b.** plans






**29.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, Impington Village College, Cambridgeshire, 1936-39
**a.** model
**b.** ground floor plan



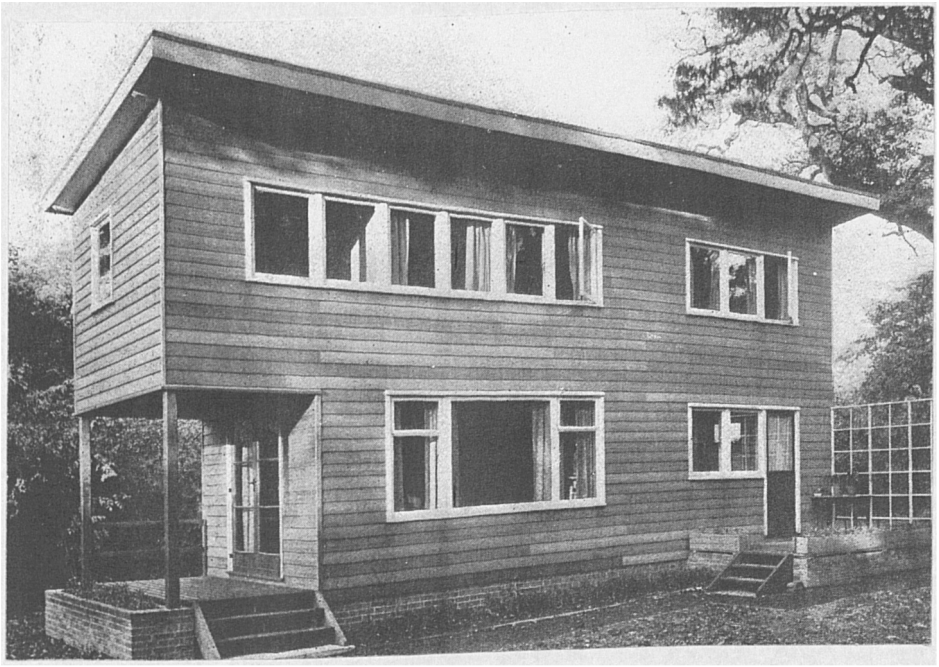


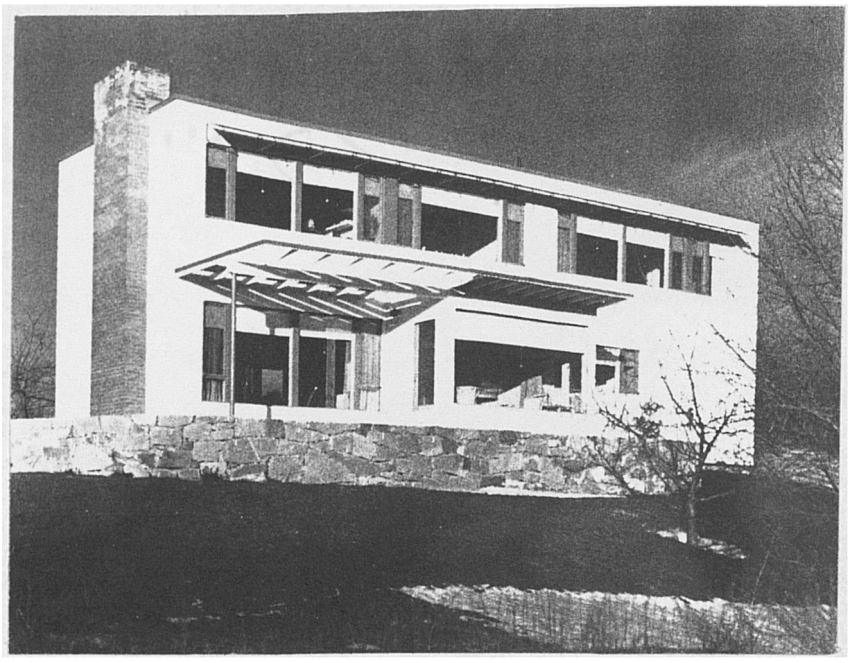

**30.** Walter Gropius & Maxwell Fry, Wood House, Shipbourne, Kent, 1936-37

**a.** elevations, south

**b.** elevations, west and south

**c.** ground floor plan





**31.** Albert Proskauer (with Le Mare), 'Cedar Lodge', Redbridge, Essex, 1936
**32.** Walter Gropius (with Breuer), house for James Ford, Lincoln, Massachusetts, 1938-39

33. Walter Gropius, 'The Flat of '37', page from prospectus

## KEY TO PLAN

### DINING ROOM

Furniture: Indian Laurel with Chromium Fittings.
Walls: Panelled in Port Orford Cedar Plywood.
Floor: Carpeted in Pale Nigger Wilton.
Curtains: White novelty weave Tapestry and White Net.

No. 1. 5 ft. 6 in. Sideboard. £31 7s. 6d.

No. 2. Circular Table fitted with built-in turntable. £32 5s. 0d.

No. 3. 6 Pale Brown Hide upholstered Chairs. £6 6s. 0d. each.

No. 4. 3 ft. 6 in. Serving Table. £12 7s. 6d.

ACCESSORIES NOT SHOWN ON PLAN.

5-ft. 6-in. x 3-ft. 10-in. oblong Mirror.
4 indirect Wall Lights in Chromium Finish.
1 Centre Light in Chromium with White Flashed Opal Bowl.

### LIVING ROOM

Furniture: Indian Laurel with Chromium Fittings.
Walls: Panelled in Port Orford Cedar Plywood.
Floor: Carpeted in Pale Nigger Wilton.
Curtains: Rough texture Beige Tapestry and Pale Pink Net.
Partition Curtains: Fadeless Copper Chenille.

No. 5. Three-Cushion Sofa designed by Professor Gropius, upholstered in Beige and Pale Nigger Camel Hair Fabric. £27 10s. 0d.

No. 6. 2 large Arm-chairs designed by Professor Gropius, upholstered in Beige and Pale Nigger Camel Hair Fabric. £13 15s. 0d. each.

No. 7. 2 upholstered Chairs in Beige Camel Hair Fabric, designed by Professor Gropius. £6 0s. 0d. each.

No. 8. Pale Brown Hide upholstered Writing Chair. £8 10s. 0d.

No. 9. 4 ft. 6 in. x 2 ft. 3 in. Writing Desk with six drawers and Brown leather top. £33 15s. 0d.

No. 10. Indian Laurel Occasional Table with glass top. £9 9s. 0d.

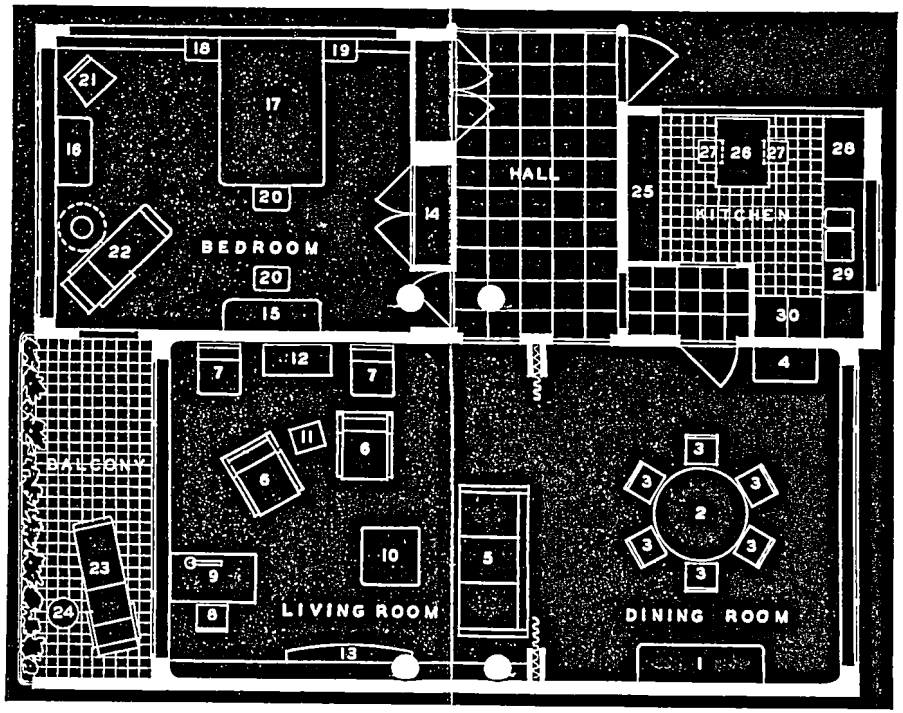
No. 11. Nest of Tables fitted with Flush glass top. £9 9s. 0d.

No. 12. Collapsible Tea Trolley. £7 0s. 0d.

No. 13. Mirror glass Fireplace designed by Professor Gropius.

ACCESSORIES NOT SHOWN ON PLAN.

3-kilowatt inset Ferranti Electric Fire.
6 built-in Glass Book Shelves.
26-in Convex Circular Mirror.
3 Cream Enamel tubular metal Flower Pot Stands.
Walnut and Chromium Floor Standard with adaptable lighting head.
Chromium Desk Lamp with matt Aluminium Shade.
Peach Tufted Rug designed by Marian Dorn.
Grizzly Bear Skin Rug.
4 Indirect Wall Lights in Chromium Finish.




The numbered items are fully explained and priced on the adjacent key.

I HAVE designed this Flat to satisfy one's need for relaxation and stimulating diversion, so essential in these distracting days and to enable one by its free and easy atmosphere to lead a natural and unconstrained life. I consider that living free from the friction caused by unpractical surroundings is essential for the attainment of the maximum amount of personal liberty and independence. The modern mind calls for directness and harmony both in the shapes and in the arrangement of our daily surroundings. The quiet beauty of genuine materials of simple forms and of clear harmonious colours add new zest and greater richness to life's enjoyment.

Walter Gropius

KENDAL MILNE & CO. ∴ DEANSGATE ∴ MANCHESTER 3

## KEY TO PLAN continued

### BEDROOM

Furniture: Weathered Sycamore with Acacia skirtings and Copper fittings.
Walls: Covered with Beige Chinese Canvas.
Doors: Venesta Plywood.
Floor: Carpeted in Beige Wilton.
Curtains: Brown and Beige Spot Oil Silk and Ivory Net.

No. 14. Built-in Wardrobe fitted with shelves, hanging space and large mirror door.

No. 15. Pedestal Dressing Table with revolving mirror. £32 5s. 0d.

No. 16. Chest of Drawers designed by Tecton. £18 0s. 0d.

No. 17. Bedstead designed by Tecton. £15 15s.

No. 18. Bedside Table including three book shelves. £16 10s. 0d.

No. 19. Bedside Table including three book shelves. £13 10s. 0d.

No. 20. Bedroom Stool with Pink quilted Chintz cushion. £3 17s. 6d.

No. 21. Upholstered wing Easy Chair in lining designed by Professor Gropius. £11 10s. Loose cover in Quilted Chintz at 11/3 yd.

No. 22. Isokon Lounge Chair upholstered in Cream Quilted Chintz.

ACCESSORIES NOT SHOWN ON PLAN.

2 Yellow Reversible Rugs.
2 Chromium Bed Lamps
2 White Flashed Opal Wall Lamps with Copper fittings Glass and Copper Floor Standard with Pale Pink Cellulose base and Ivory Washable Shade bound with Pale Pink Velvet.

### BALCONY

Walls: Rough texture Cream Paint.
Floor: Black and White unglazed Tiles.

No. 23. Isokon Lounge Chair upholstered in Red Tweed.

No. 24. 2 Brown and Cream Cellulose Stools. 7/6 each.

### HALL

Panelled in Teak Plywood.
Teak built-in Hanging Cupboard.
Japanese Oak Plywood Floor.
Stainless Steel Plymex Entrance Door.
6-ft. x 1-ft. 4-in. Mirror.
2 Chromium and Flashed Opal Ceiling Fittings.

### KITCHEN

Walls: White enamel Paint with White glazed Tiles above Sink and Cooker.
Floor: Brick Red Rubber Flooring.

No. 25. White Cellulose Easiwork Kitchen Cabinet. £28 0s. 0d.

No. 26. White Maple Collapsible Kitchen Table. £3 10s. 0d.

No. 27. 2 Brown and White Stools 7/6 each.

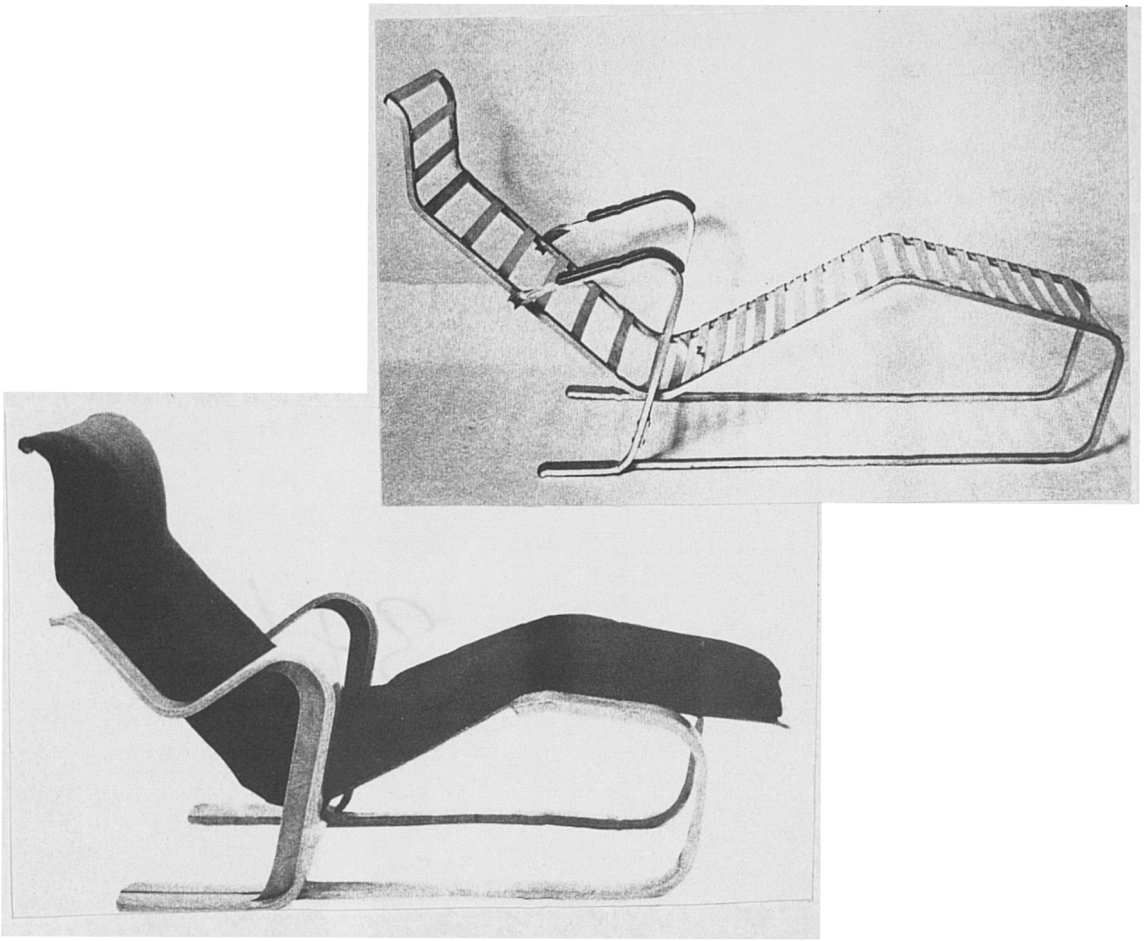
No. 28. Frigidaire built-in Refrigerator 3 cubic feet capacity. 31 gns.

No. 29. Double Savestane Sink with Swivel taps.

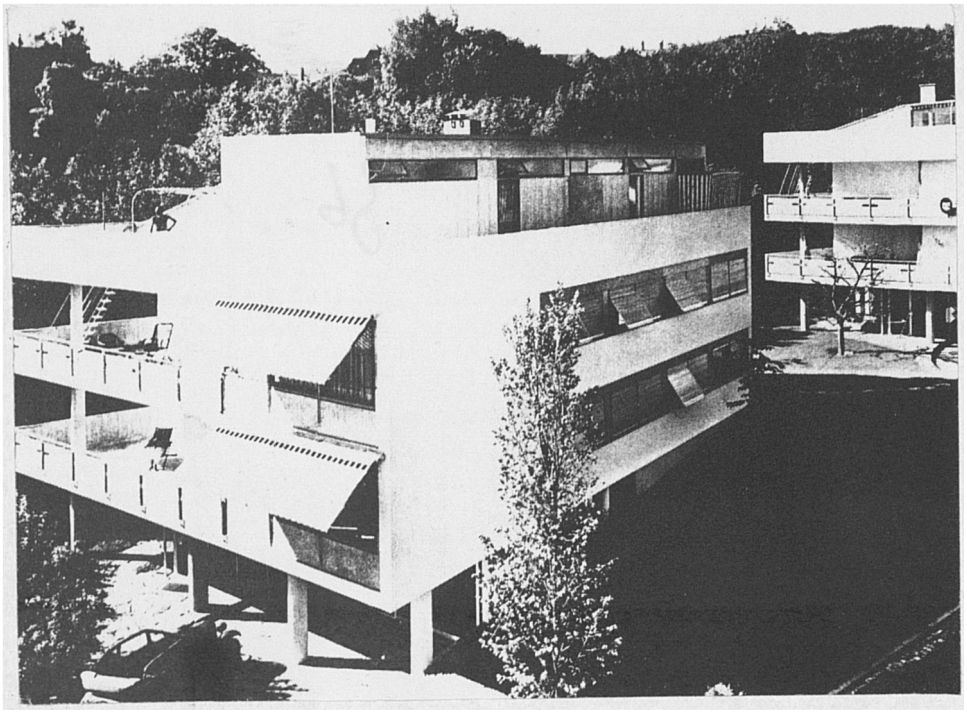
No. 30. Moffat Electric Cooker in Ivory enamel.

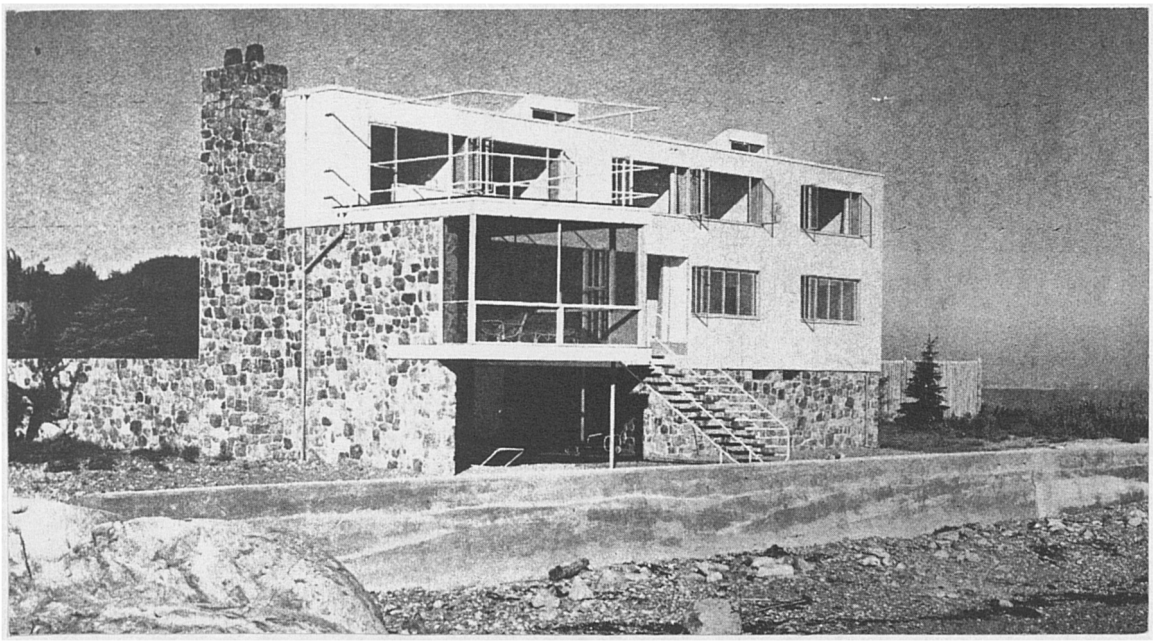
ACCESSORIES NOT SHOWN ON PLAN.

Flashed Opal and Chromium Ceiling Fitting.
Chromium Wall Fitting.

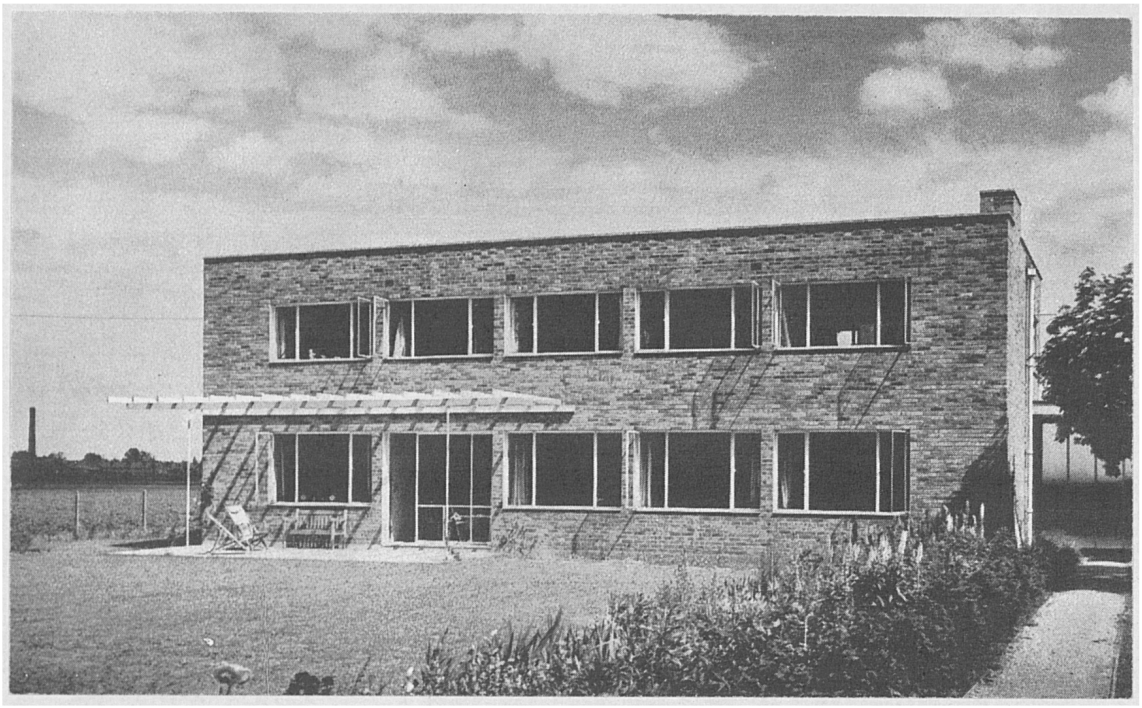


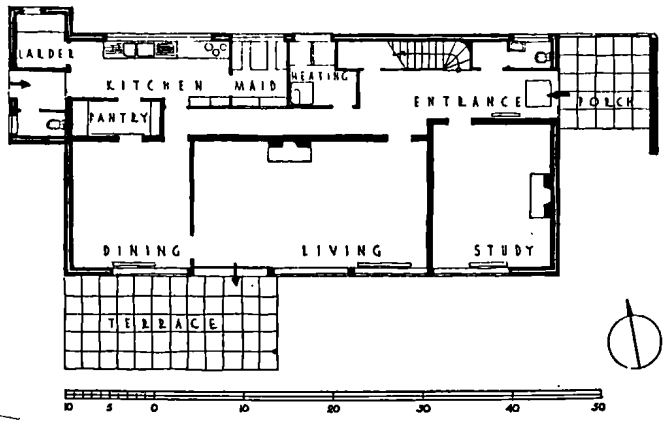
**34.** Marcel Breuer, lounge chair designs
**a.** in aluminium, *c.*1935
**b.** in plywood, 'Isokon Long Chair', 1935-36
**35.** Marcel Breuer, Ventris flat, Highgate, London, 1936



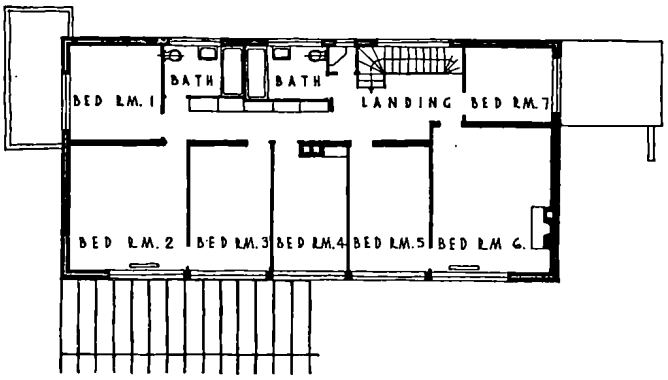


**36.** Marcel Breuer and Emil and Alfred Roth, Doldertal flats, Zurich, 1934
**37.** Marcel Breuer, Hagerty House, Cohasset, Massachusetts, 1938






GROUND FLOOR

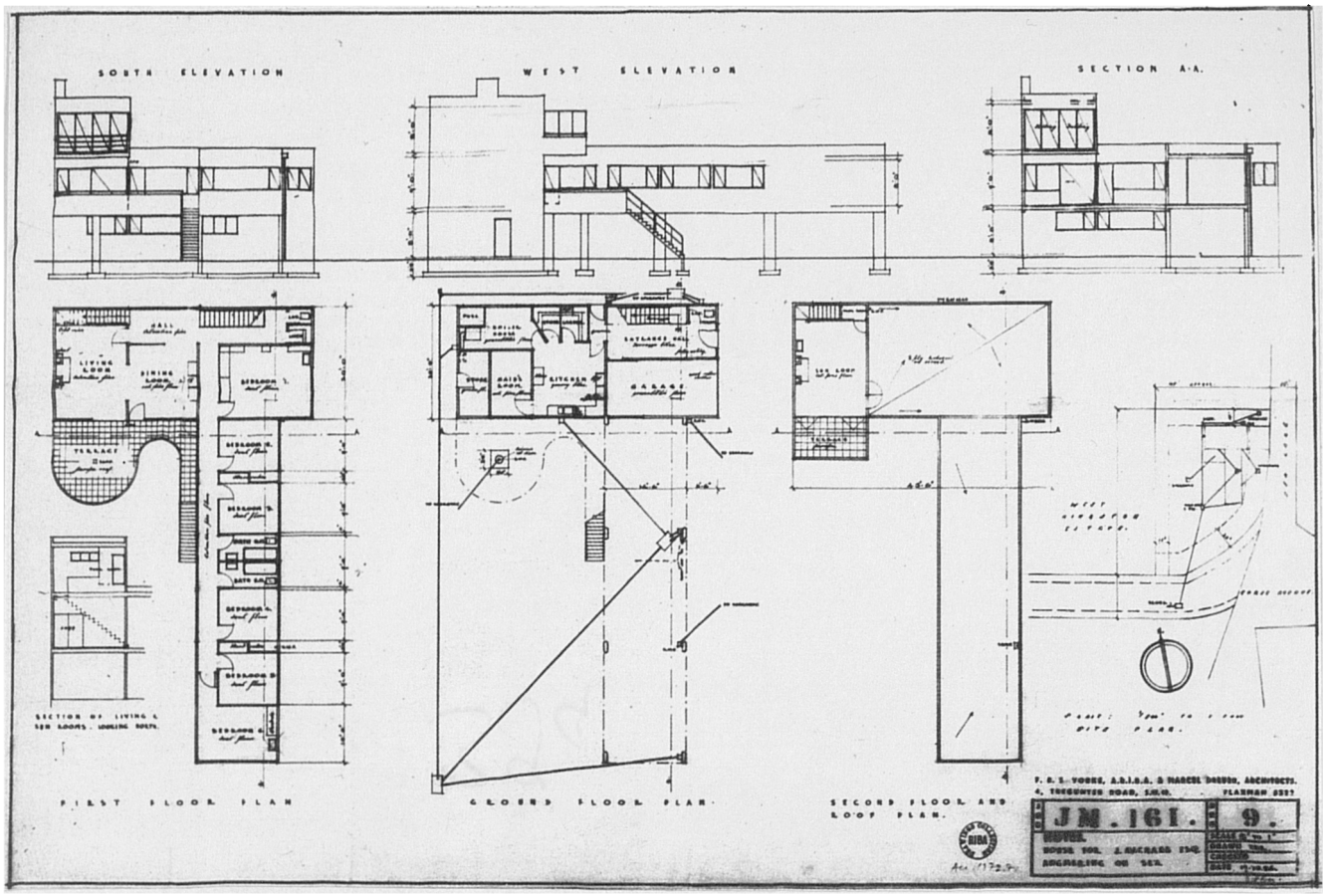


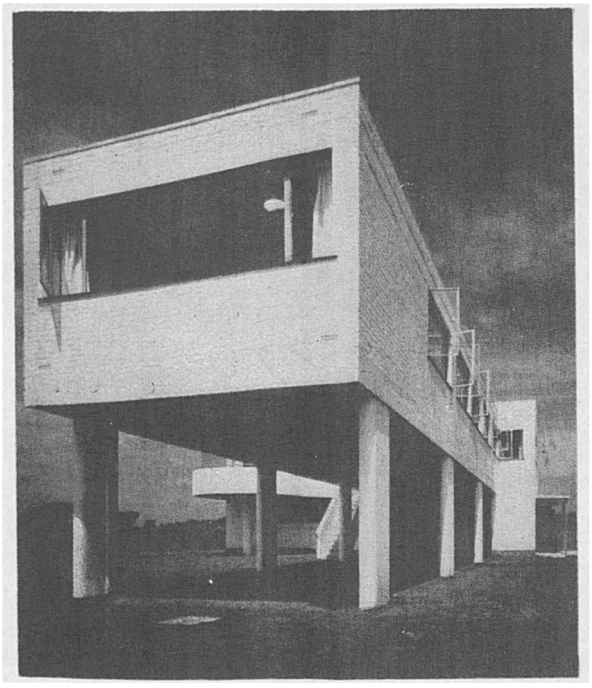

FIRST FLOOR

**38.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, masters' houses, Eton, 1935-8

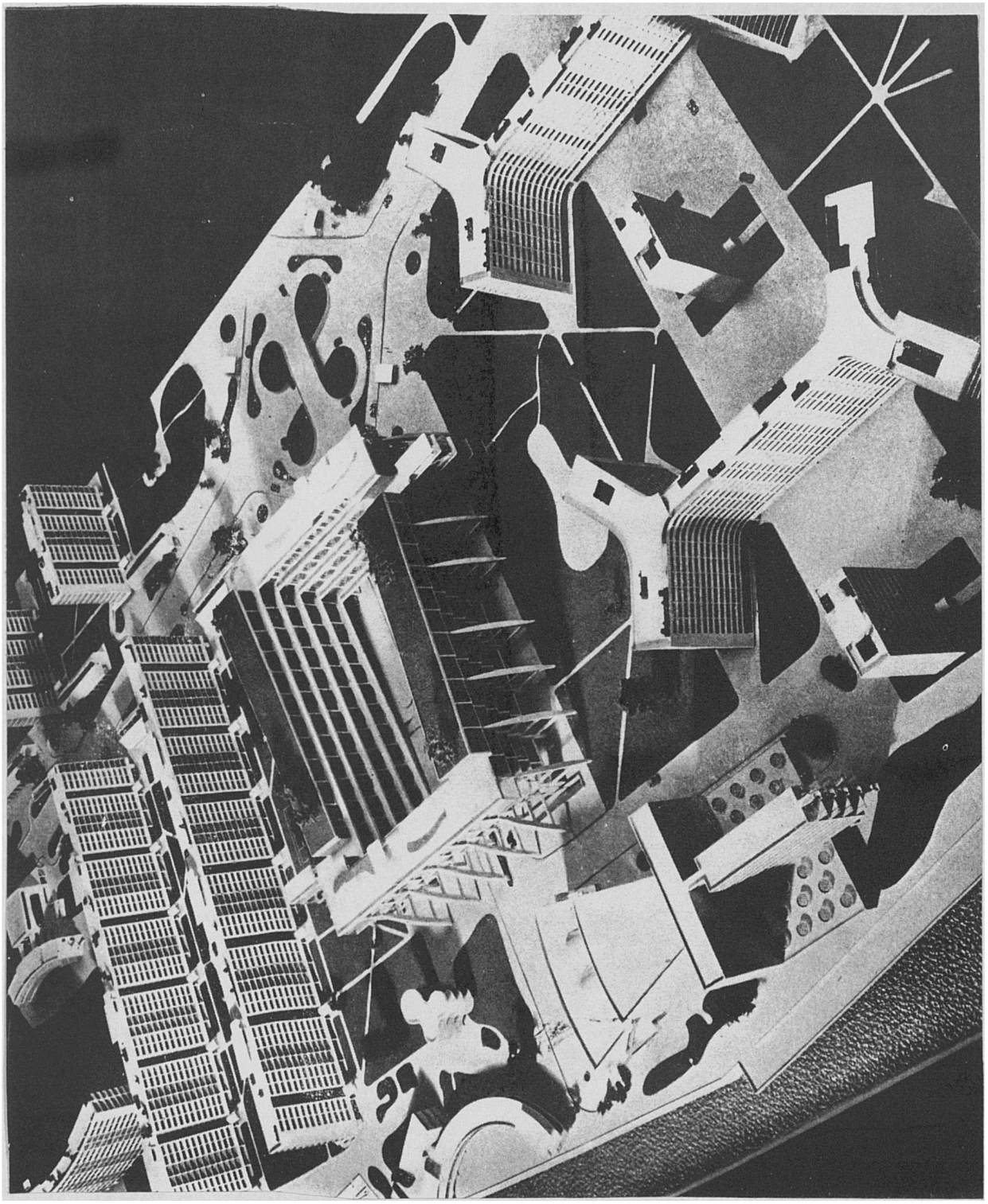
**a.** elevations, garden façade

**b.** plans

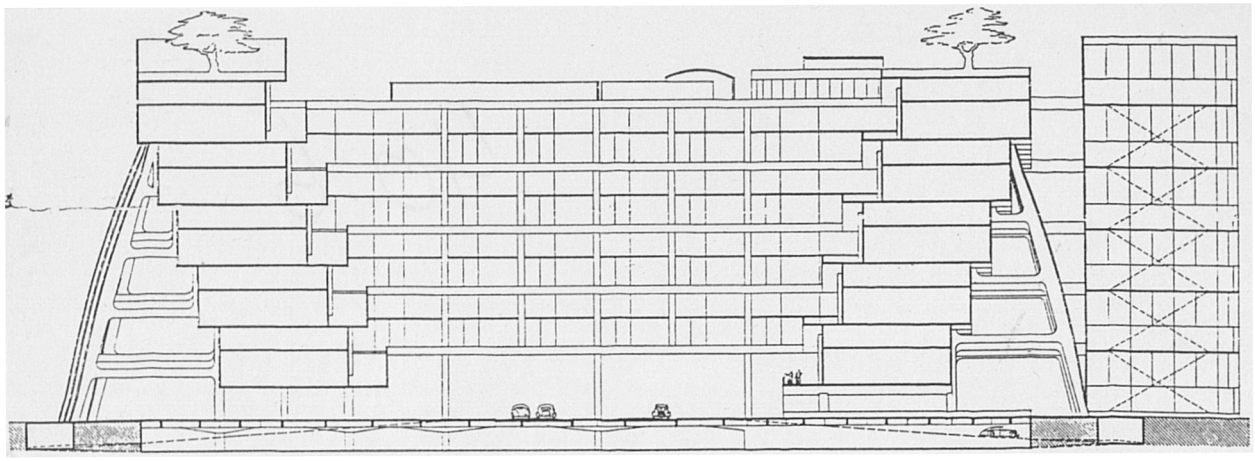


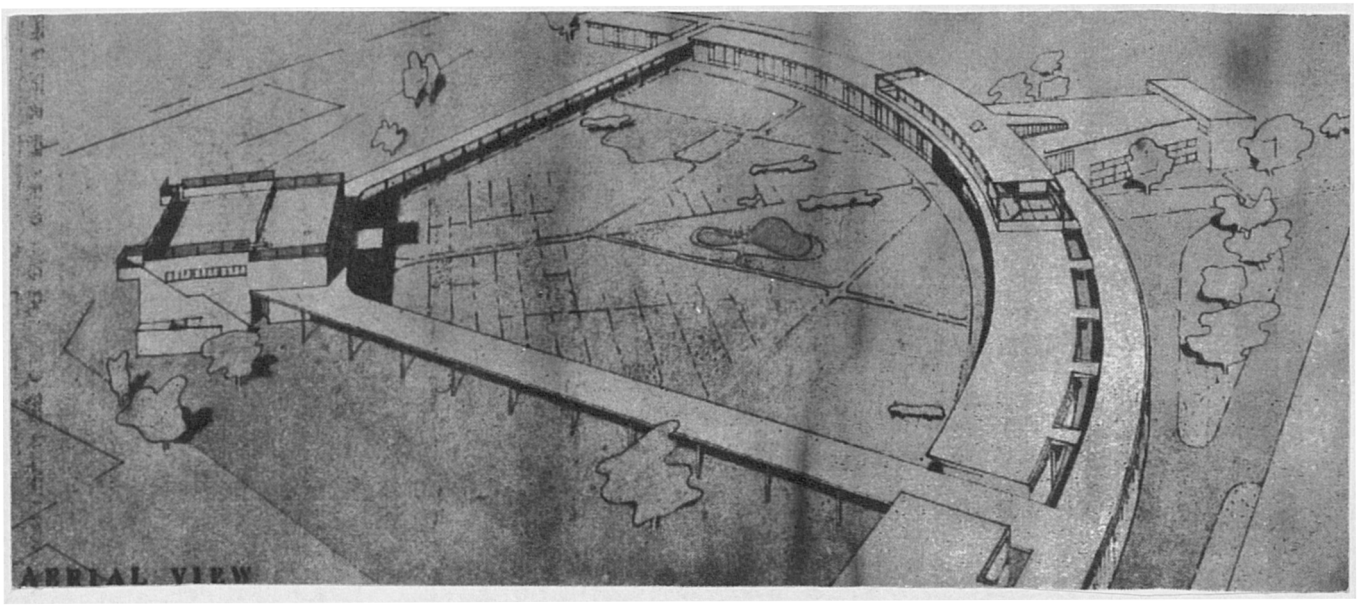
**39.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, 'Sea Lane House', Angmering-on-Sea, 1936-38
**a.** elevations and plans
**b.** bedroom wing, view from south



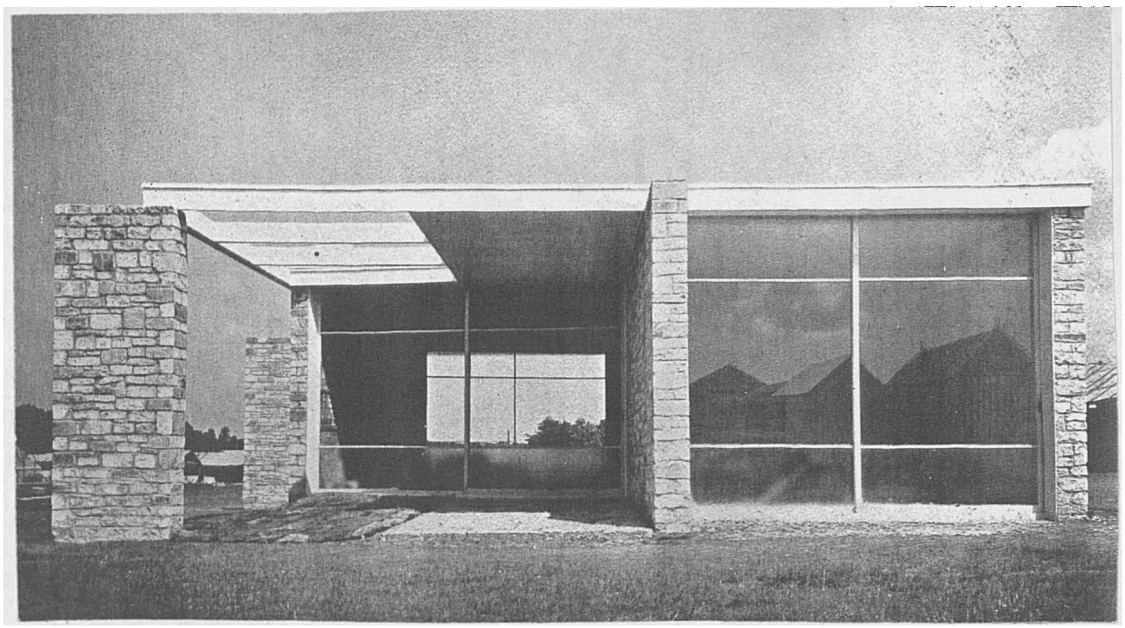
**40.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, 'Garden City of the Future', 1936

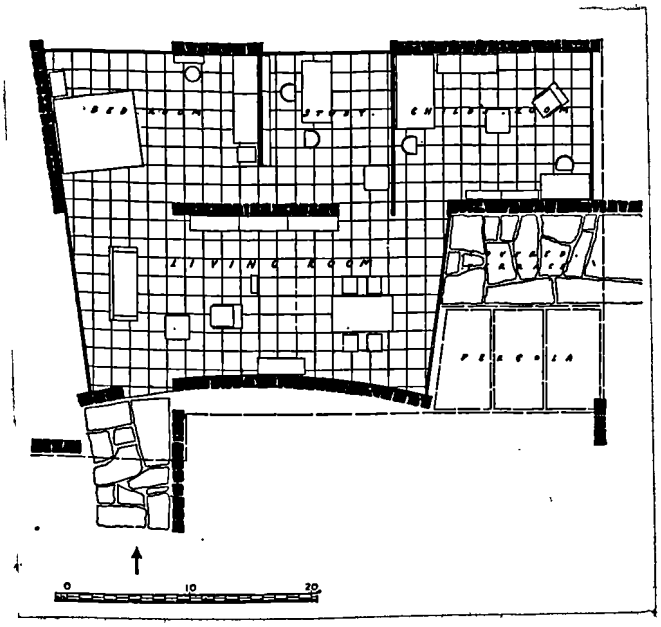


Cross Section of Shopping Centre and Underground Garage




**40.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, 'Garden City of the Future', 1936
**b.** cross section of shopping centre
**41.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, school, competition entry, 1937

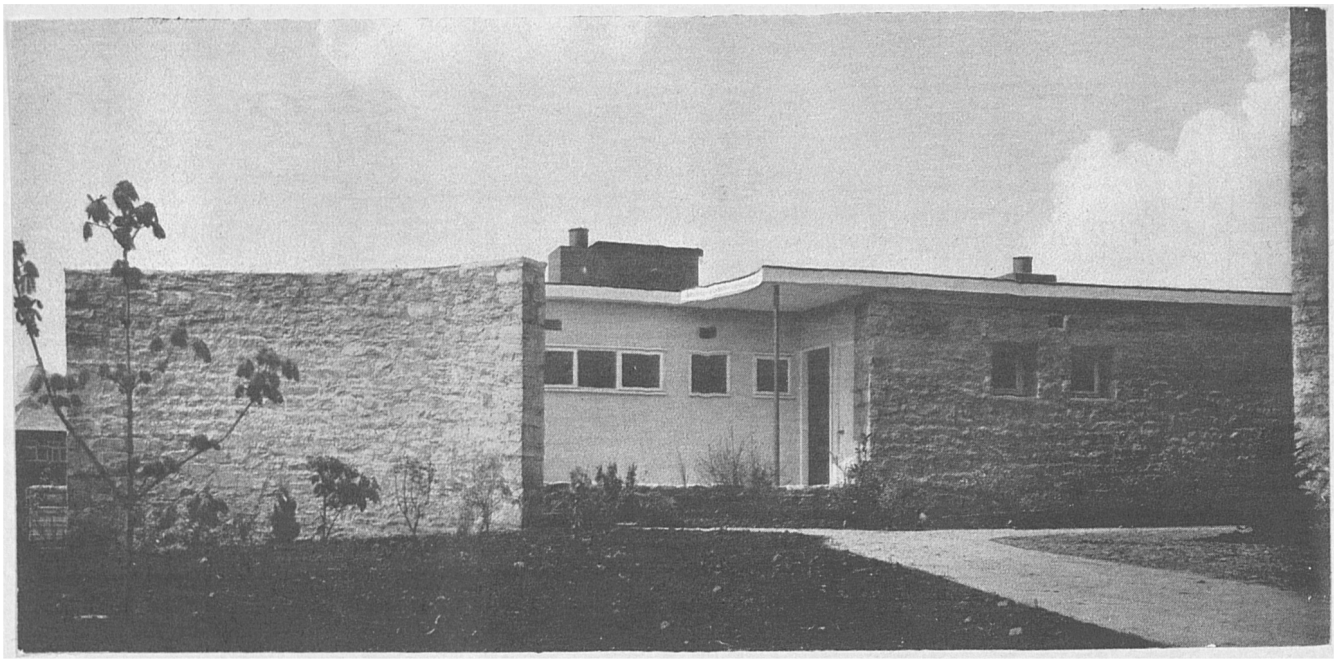


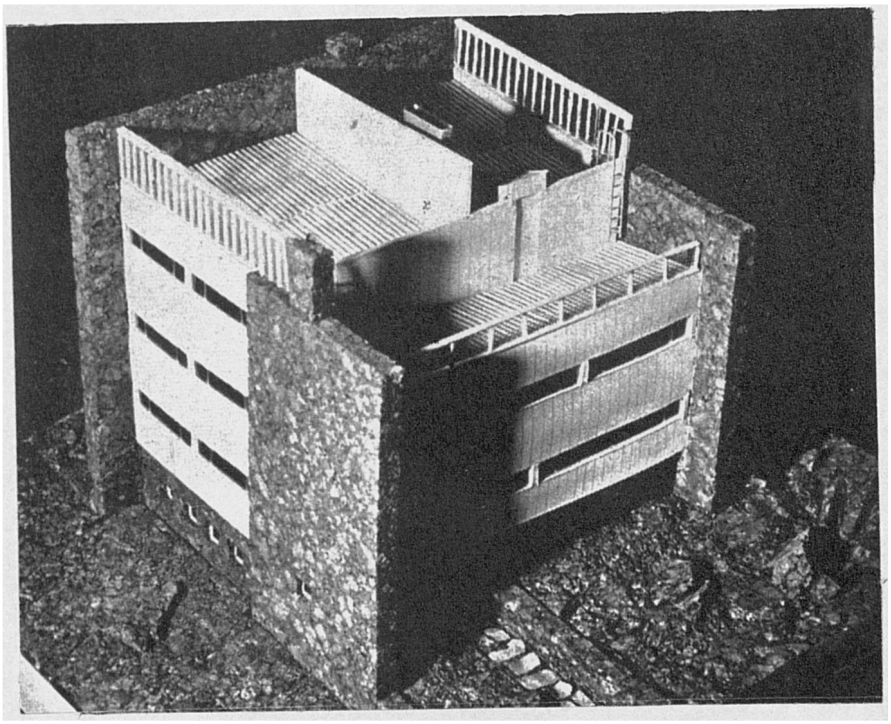



**42.** Marcel Breuer & F. R. S. Yorke, Gane Pavilion, Bristol, 1936

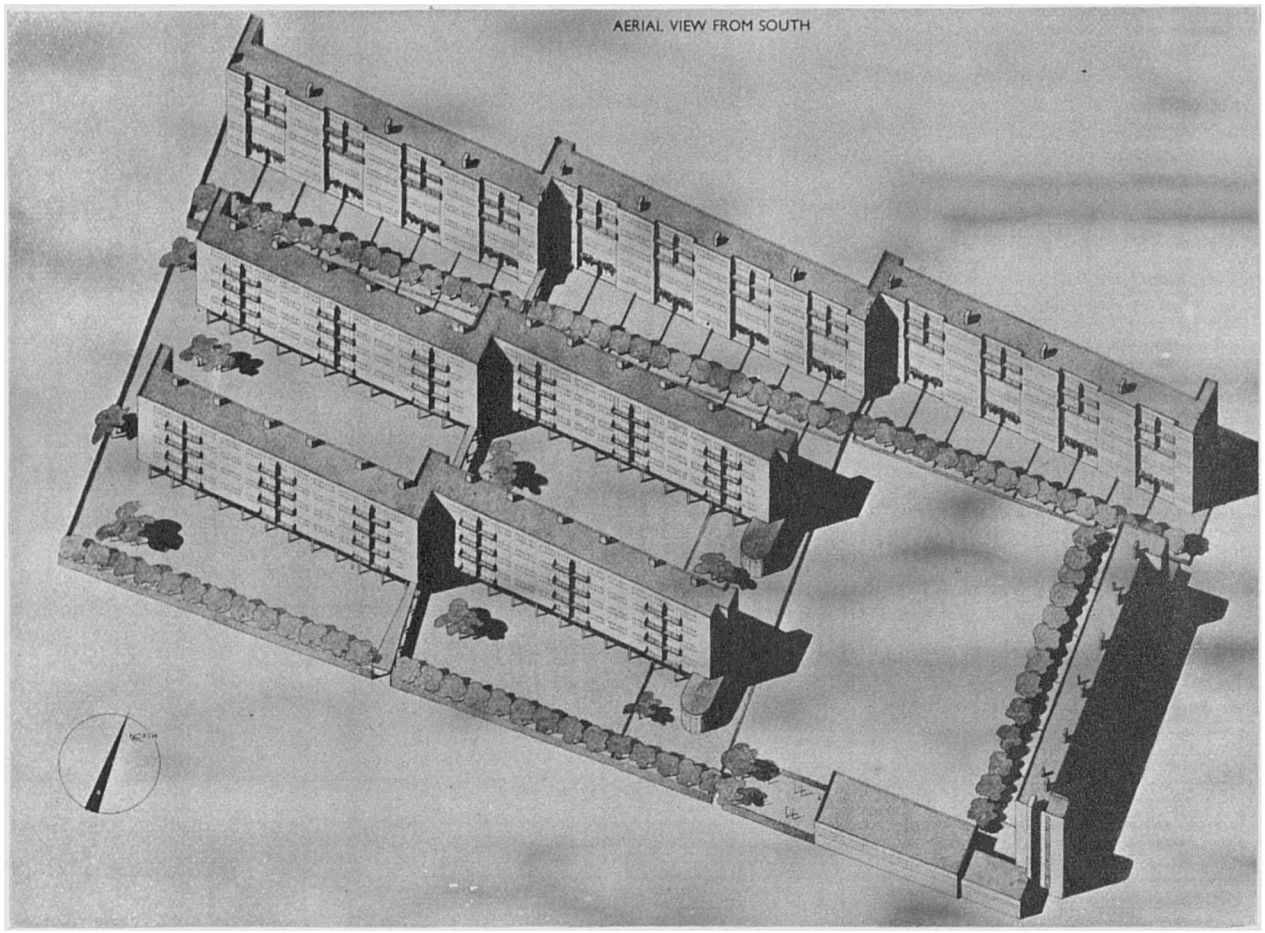
**a.** general view (Note pitched roofs of other traditional exhibition buildings reflected in large windows.)

**b.** plan

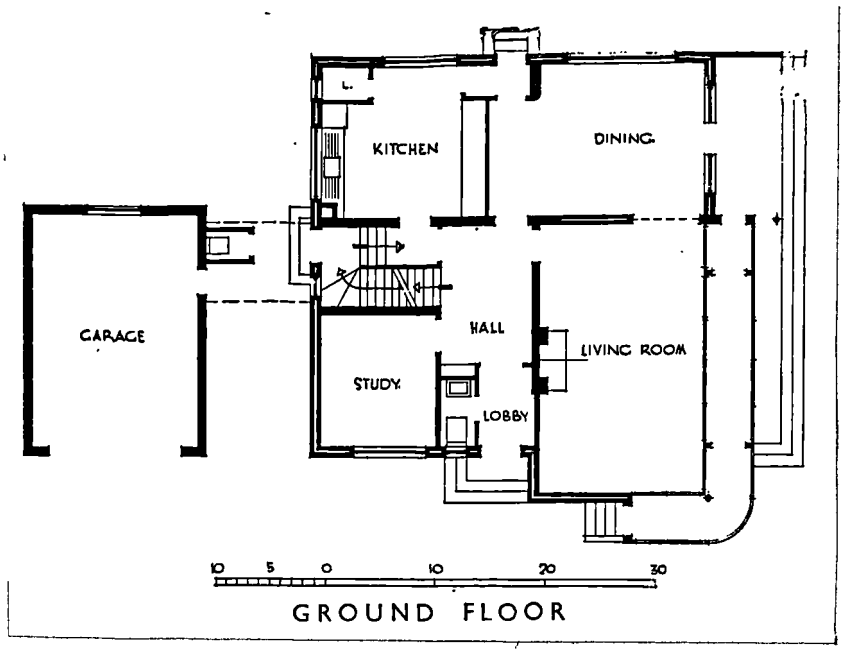




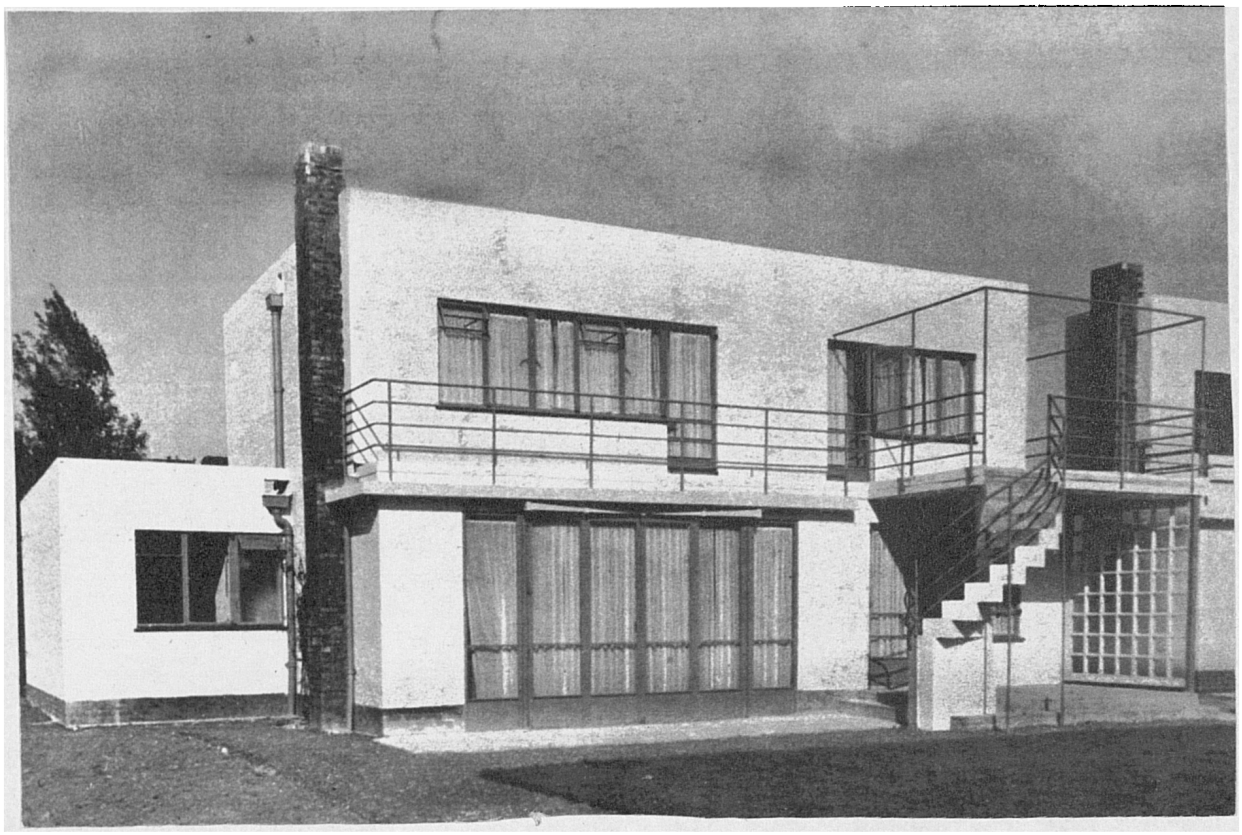
**43.** Dennis Clarke Hall, caretaker's cottage, Richmond, Yorkshire, 1939
**44.** Marcel Breuer, ski hotel, Ober-Gurgl, Tyrol, 1937-38

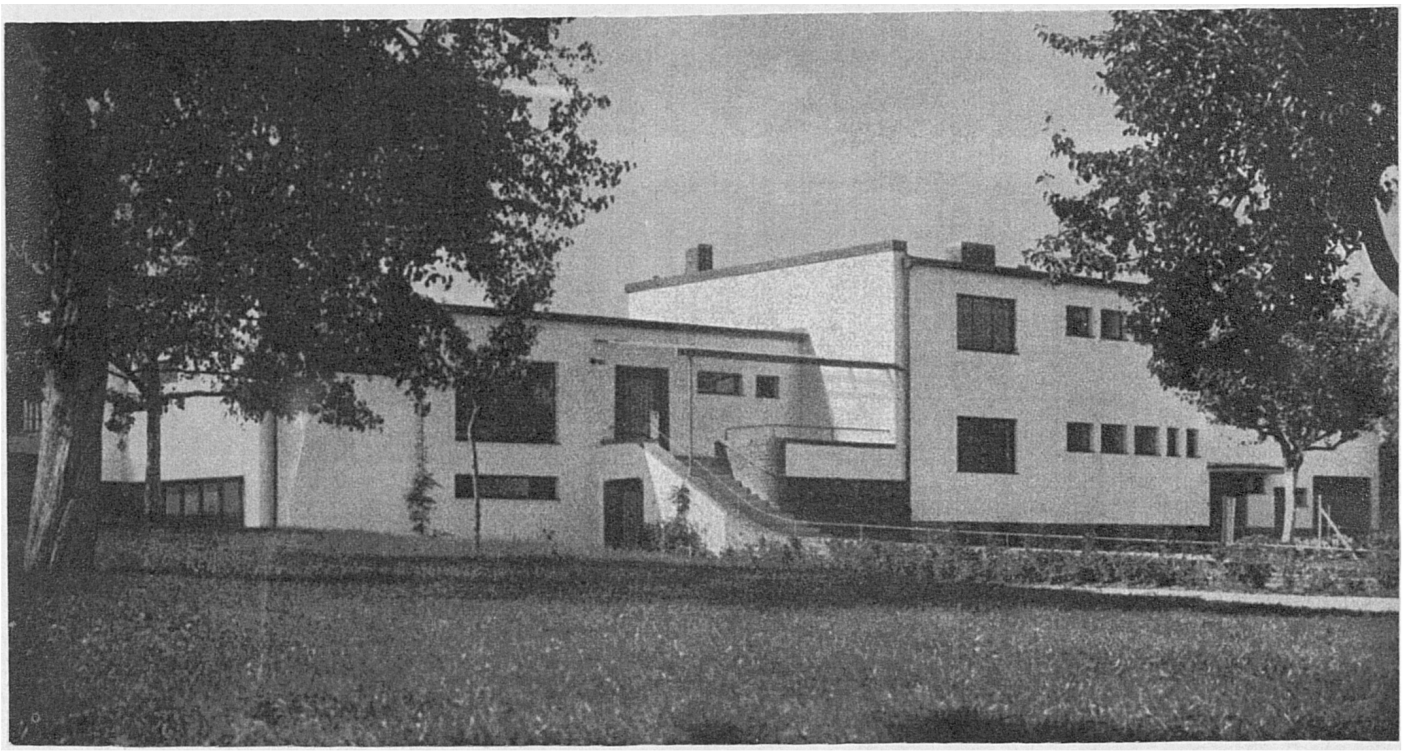



**45.** Eugen Kaufmann, workers' flats, competition entry, 1935
**46.** F. G. Southgate, Priory Court, Walthamstow, 1946-. (Note stark difference between *Zeilenbau* and English suburban terraces.)

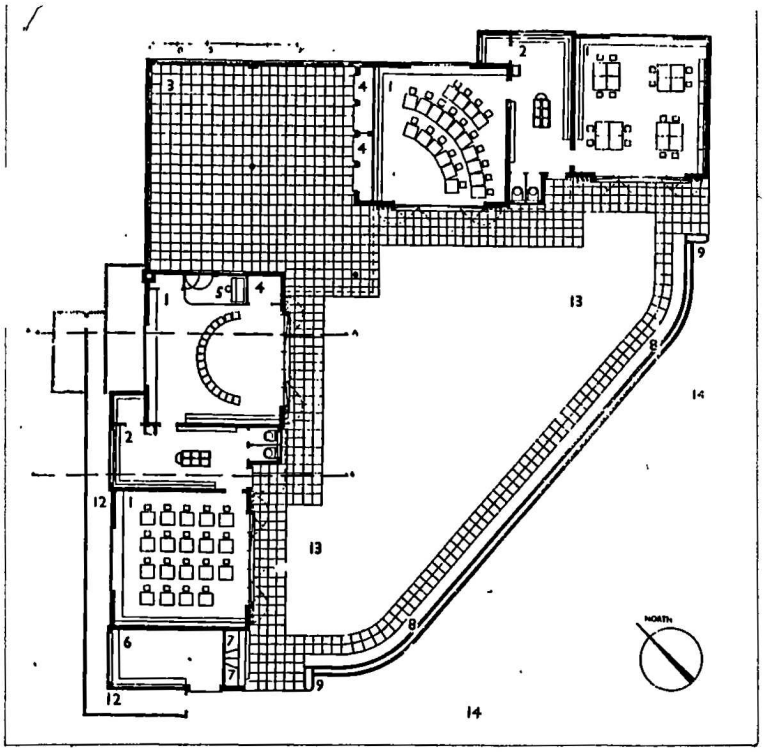



**47.** Eugen Kaufmann & Elizabeth Benjamin, 55 Victoria Drive, Wimbledon, 1934-35
- **a.** garden façade
- **b.** ground floor plan

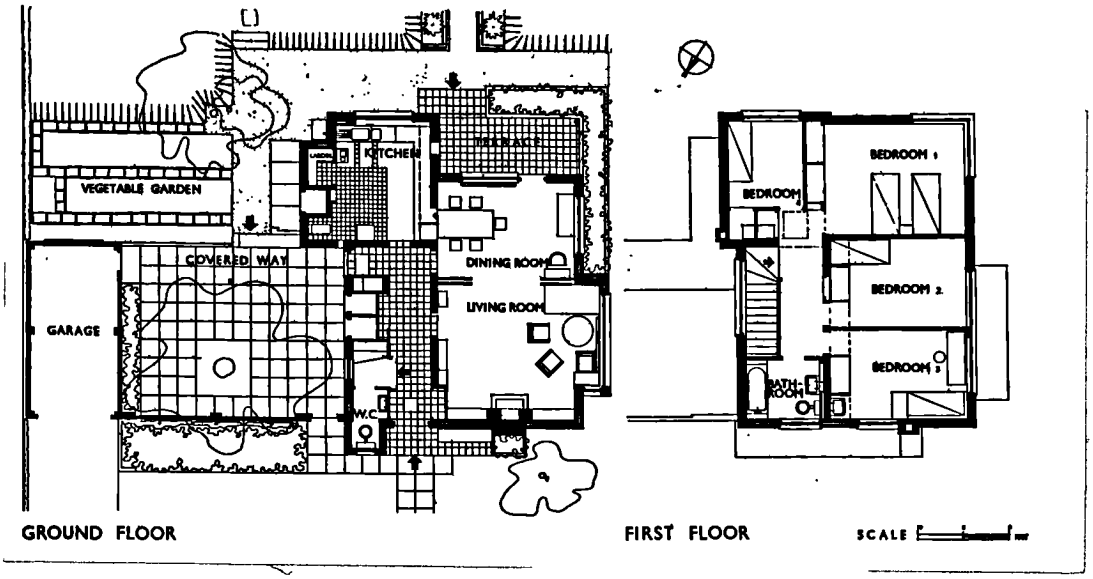




**48.** Eugen Kaufmann, house in Willowhayne Lane, Angmering-on-Sea, 1936
**49.** Eugen Kaufmann (with Roland Naumann), school in Wörsdorf in Taunus, 1930-31



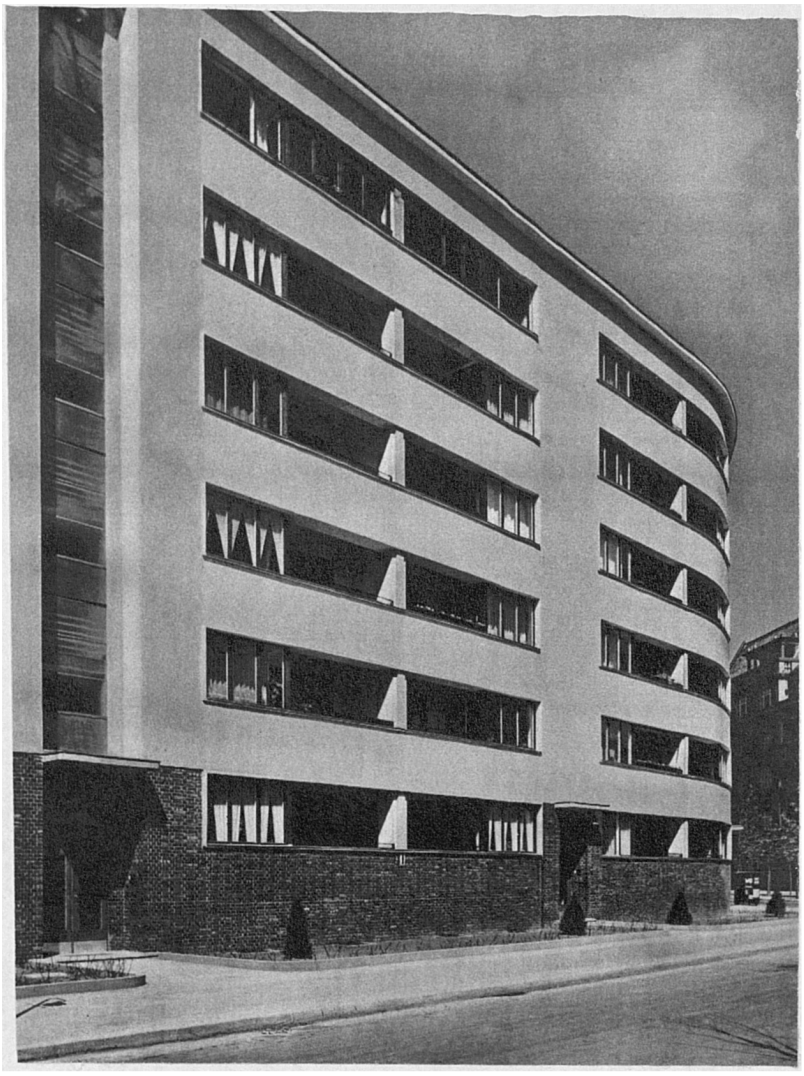

**50.** Eugen Kaufmann, junior block, King Alfred School, Hampstead, London, 1936
**a.** view from south
**b.** plan



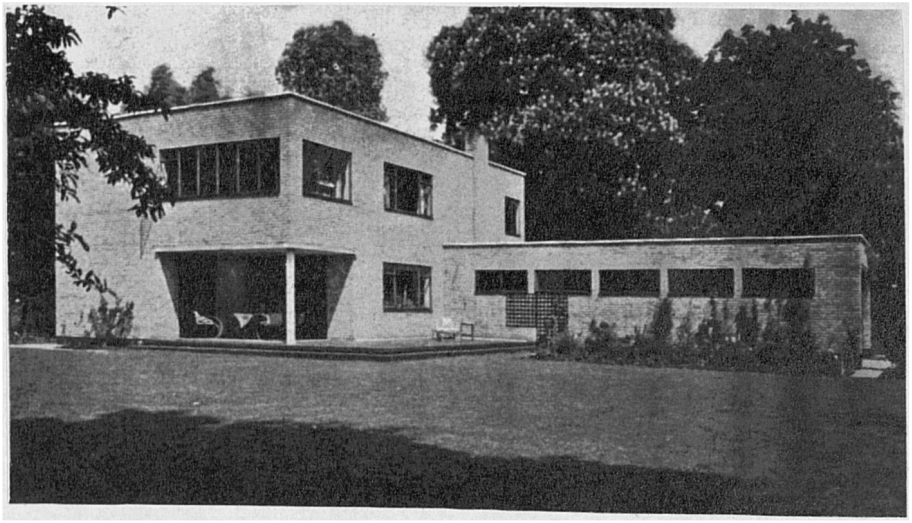

**51.** Eugen Kaufmann, architect's own house, Welwyn Garden City, 1937-38

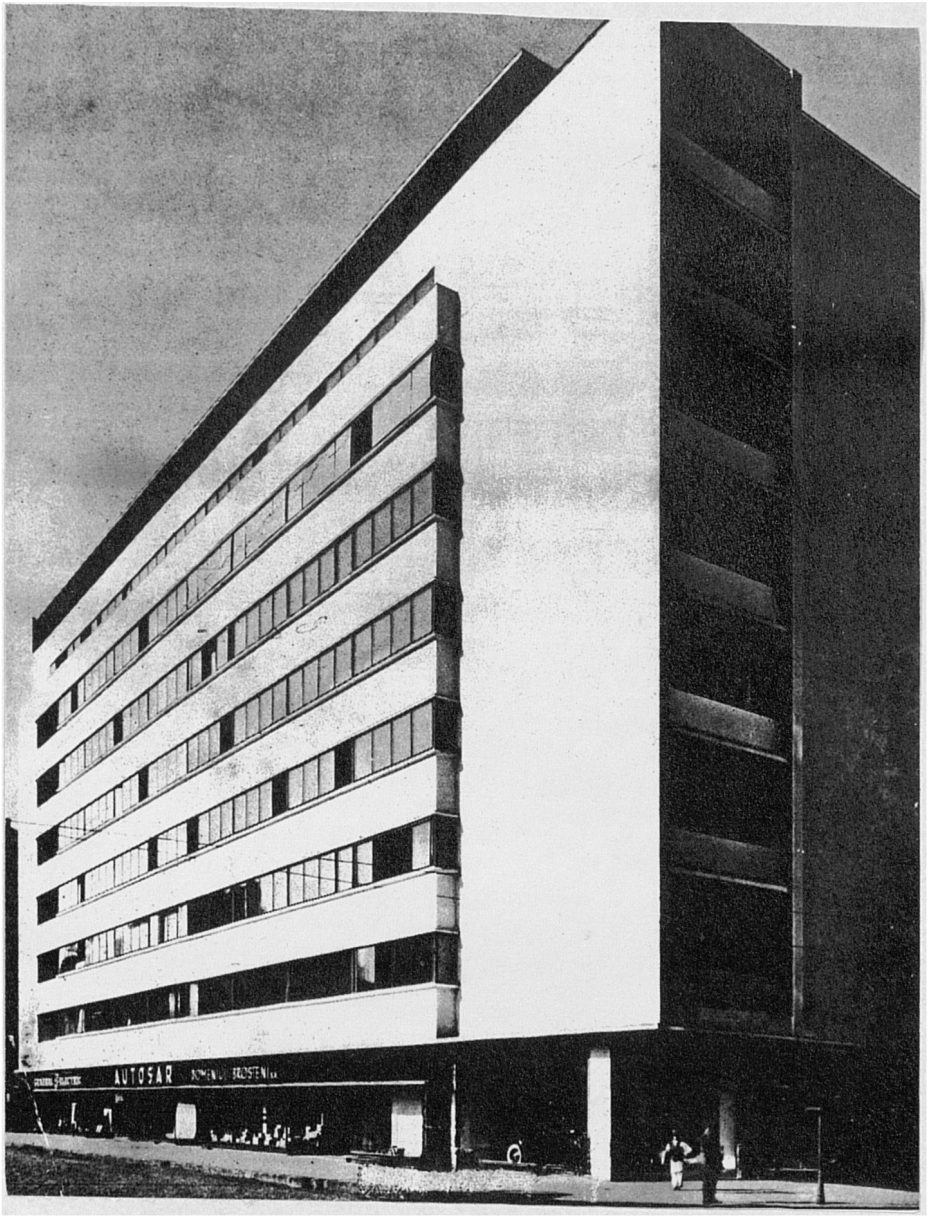
**a.** elevations, view from west

**b.** plans



**52.** Rudolf Fränkel, flats, Siedlung Gesundbrunnen, Berlin-Humboldthain, 1928
**53.** Rudolf Fränkel, flats, Schöneberg, Berlin, 1932



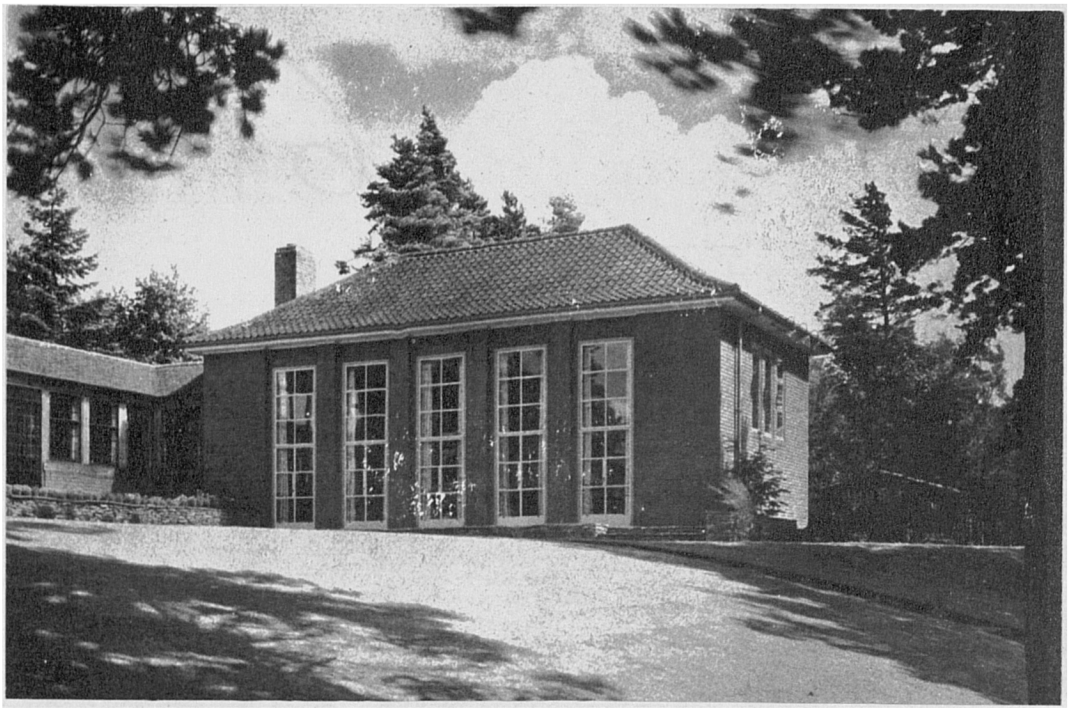


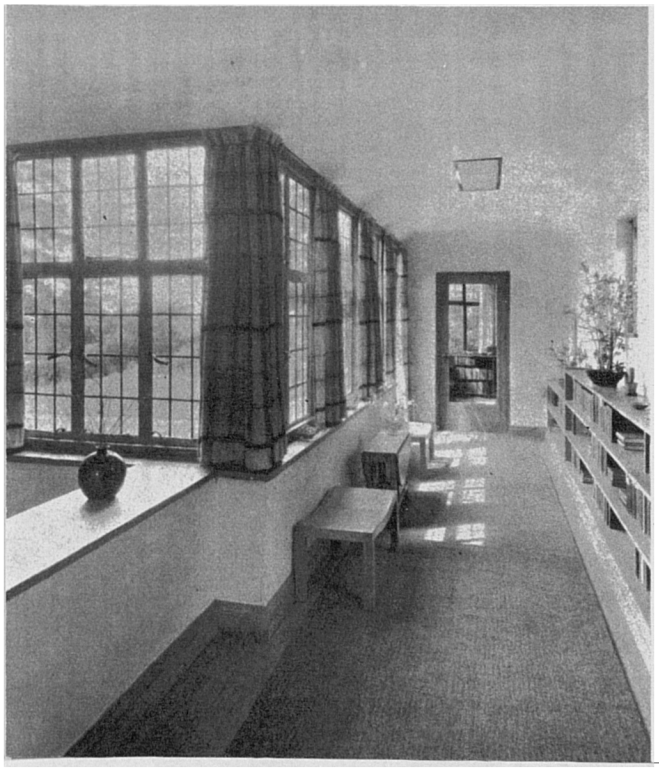

**54.** Rudolf Fränkel, 1 Halsbury Close, Stanmore, Middlesex, 1938-40
**55.** Rudolf Fränkel, flats, Malaxa building, Bucharest, 1934


**56.** Rudolf Fränkel, 'Hillcrest', Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 1938
**57.** Rudolf Fränkel, offices and machine tool showroom, London, 1939

**58.** Rudolf Fränkel, 19 Chestnut Drive, Stanmore, Middlesex, c.1939. (Note how later additions such as mock-Tudor doors and bow windows have disfigured the simple modernist design.)
**59.** Ernst Freud, country house for Dr Frank, Geltow, 1928-30


**60.** Ernst Freud, 14 Neville Drive, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 1936
- **a.** garden façade
- **b.** street façade





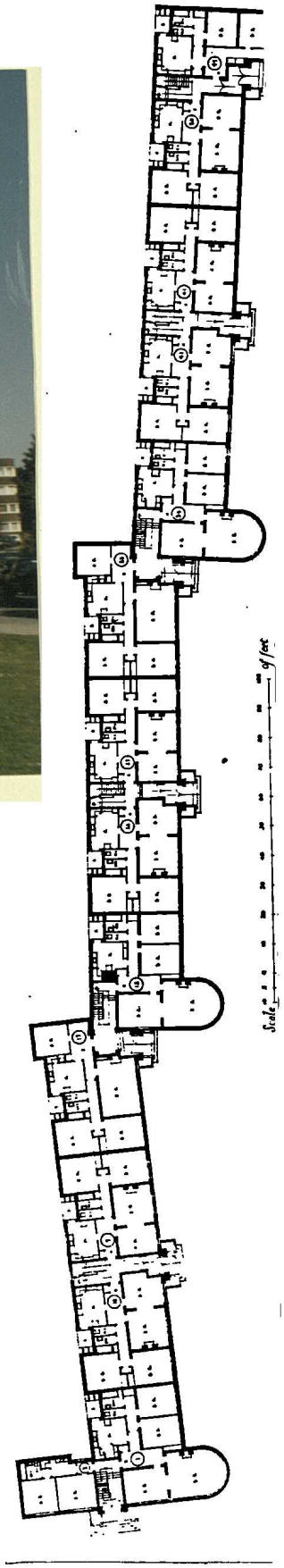
**61.** Ernst Freud, music room, Pine House, Churt, Surrey, c.1936

**a.** elevations, view from garden

**b.** interior, view of passage-way from music room to house (Note small-paned windows.)

**c.** interior, showing seating area with rug by Marion Dorn



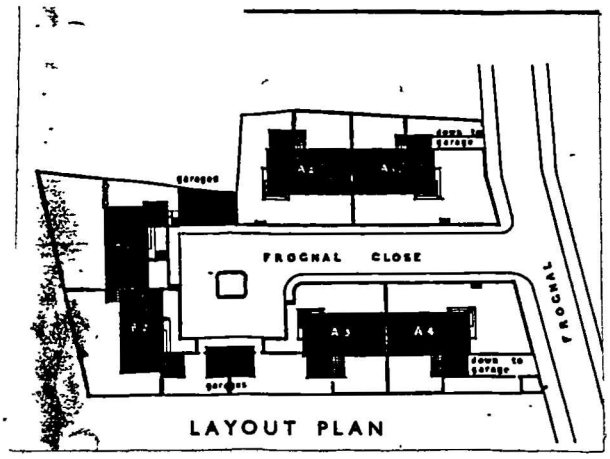


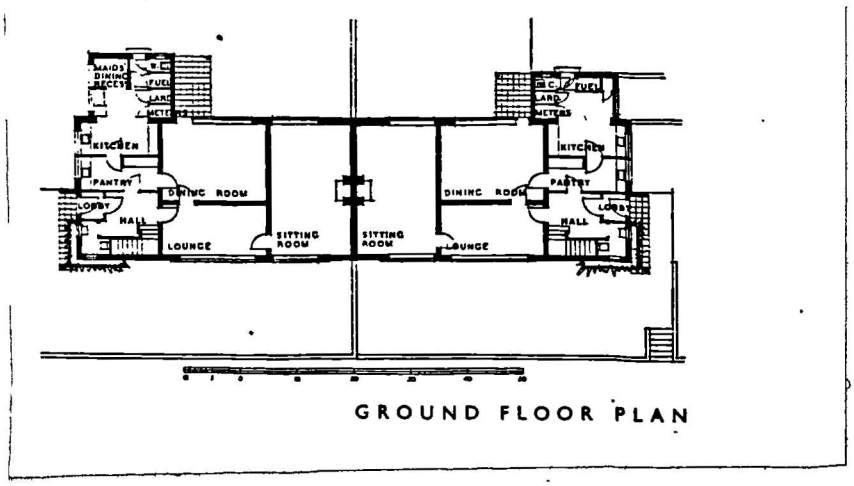
**62.** (top) Ernst Freud, Belvedere Court, flats Lyttleton Road, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, 1938

**a.** street façade

**b.** (right) ground floor plan

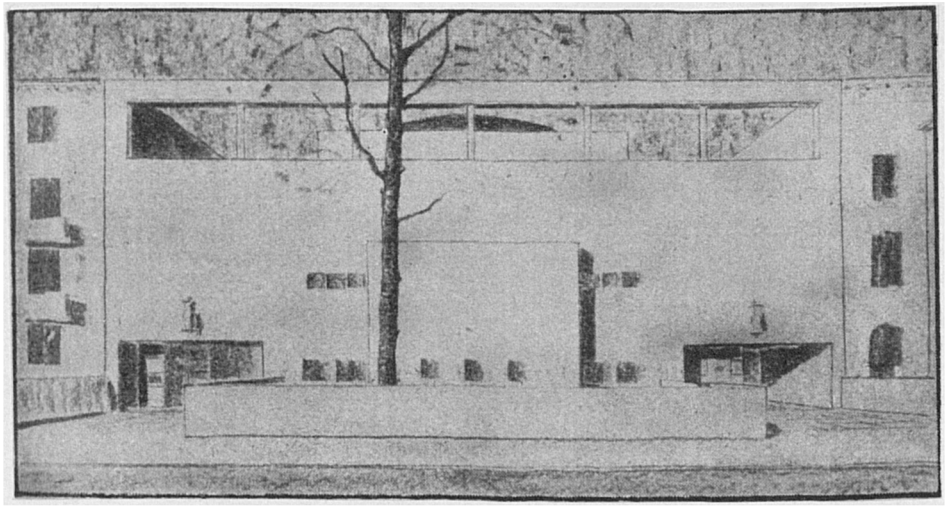
**63.** Robert Atkinson, Stockleigh Hall, London, 1936



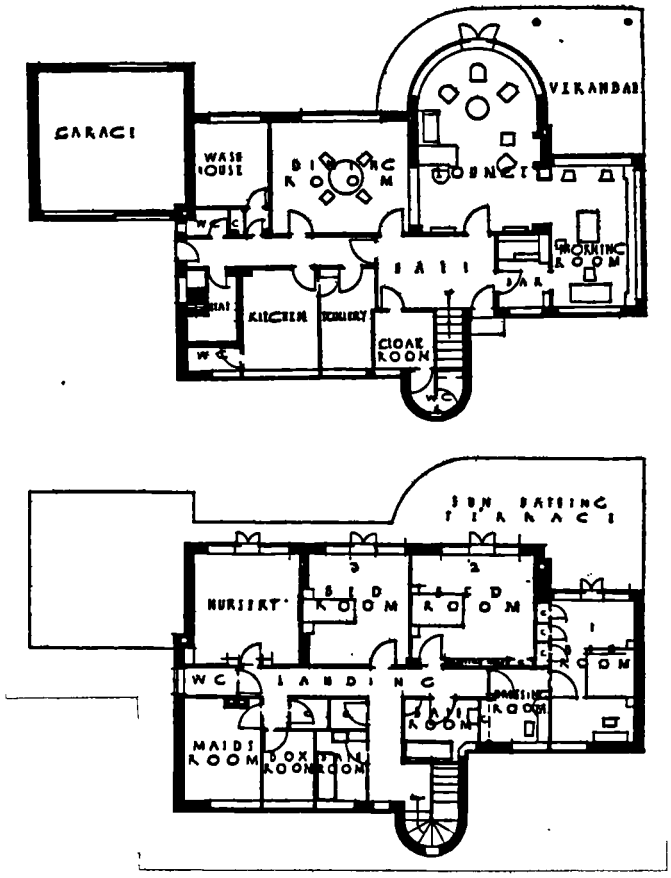

**64.** Ernst Freud, houses in Frognal Close, Hampstead, London, 1936-38

- **a.** view from street
- **b.** general layout
- **c.** plans

**65.** Hans Jaretzki, cinema, Berlin-Steglitz, c.1930
**66.** Hans Jaretzki and Alfred Wiener, synagogue, Klopstockstrasse, Berlin, competition design, 1929

**67.** Hans Jaretzki, flats, Siedlung in Berlin-Weissensee, c.1930
**68.** Hans Jaretzki, 'Pennsylvania' , Presbury, Cheshire, 1935-36
**a.** view from north-west

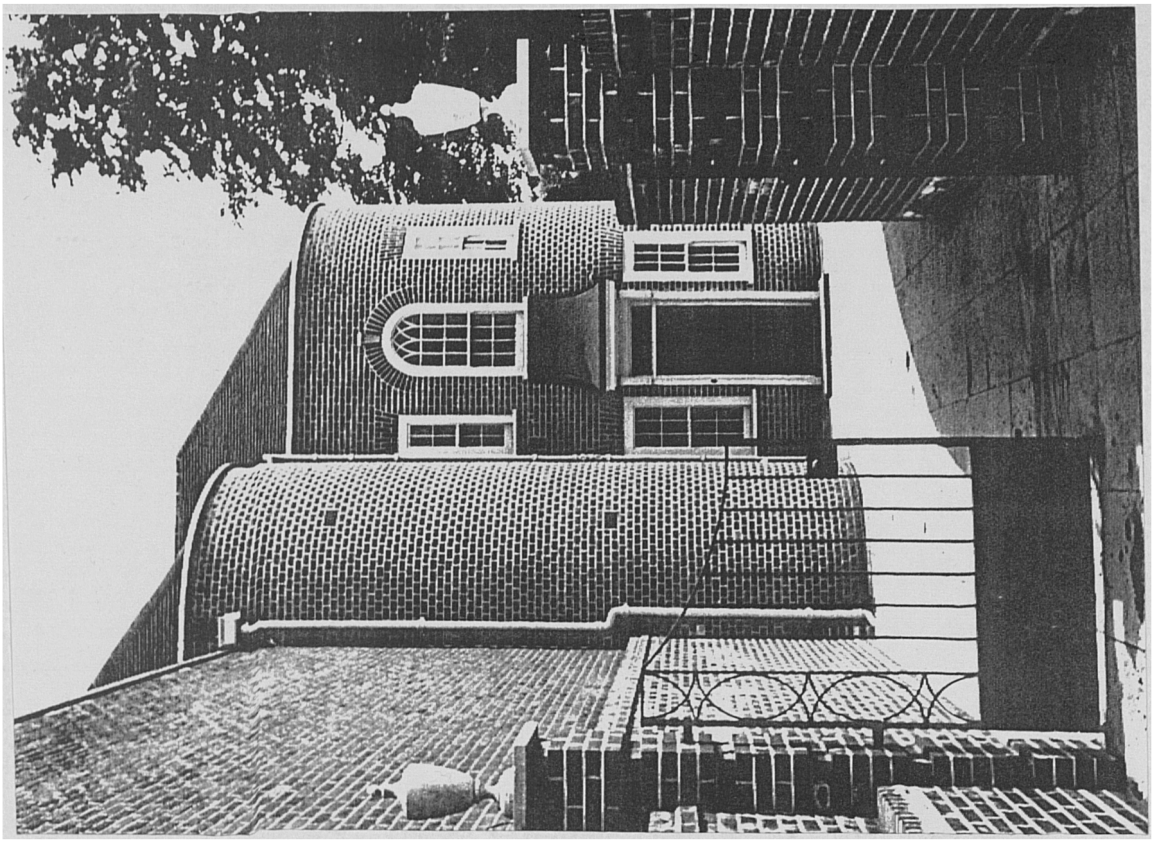


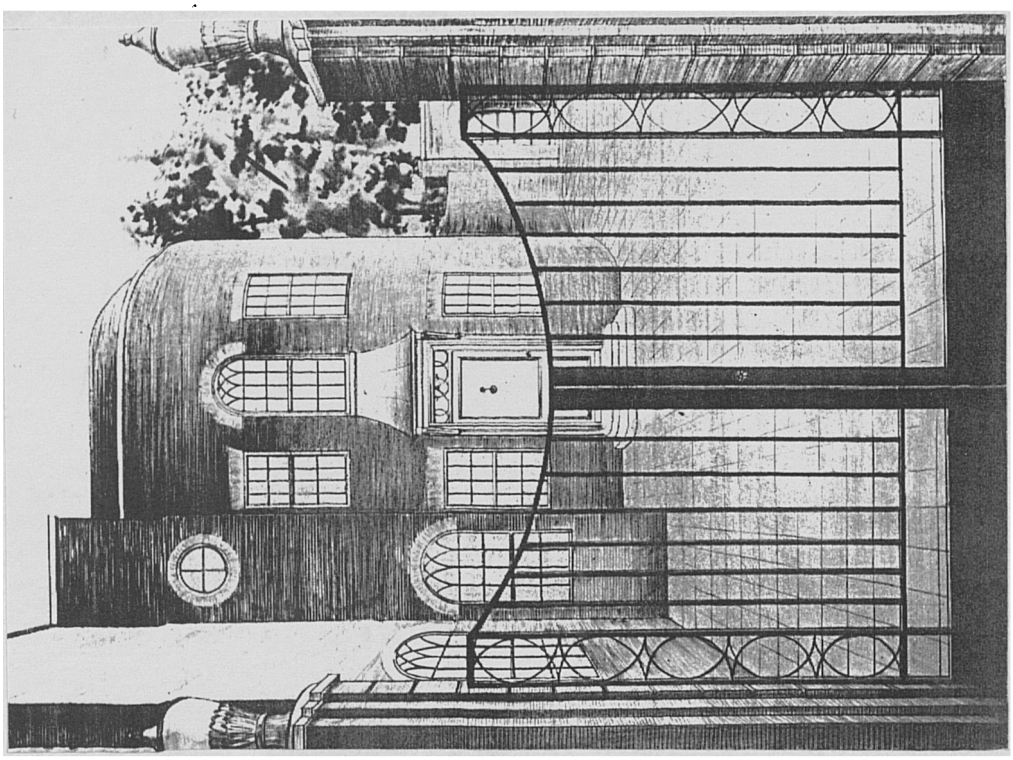

**68.** Hans Jaretzki, 'Pennsylvania' , Prestbury, Cheshire, 1935-36

**b.** view from south

**c.** plans


**69.** Hans Jaretzki, 72 Maresfield Gardens, Hampstead, London, 1937-38
**70.** Hans Jaretzki, 42 Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, London, 1937-38



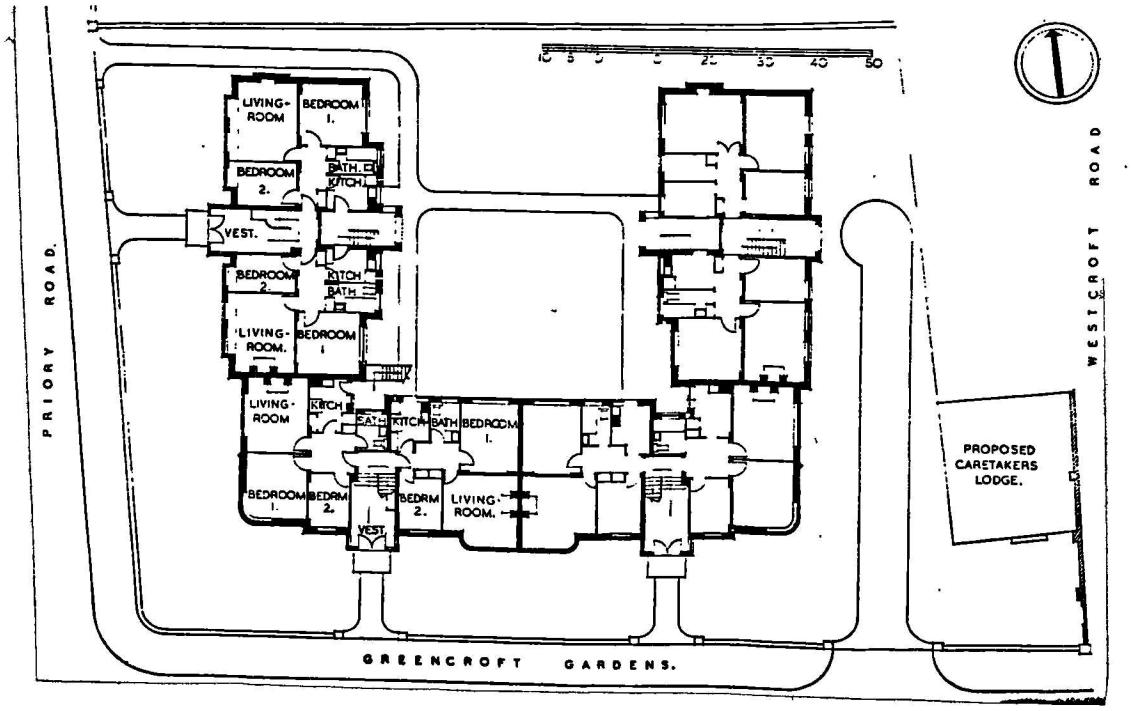


**71.** Hans Jaretzki, 46 Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, London, 1937-38

**a.** drawing

**b.** photograph, shortly after completion. Iron gates also designed by architect.

**72.** Hans Jaretzki, 44 Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, London, 1937-38
**73.** Hans Jaretzki, 6 Nutley Terrace, Hampstead, London, 1937

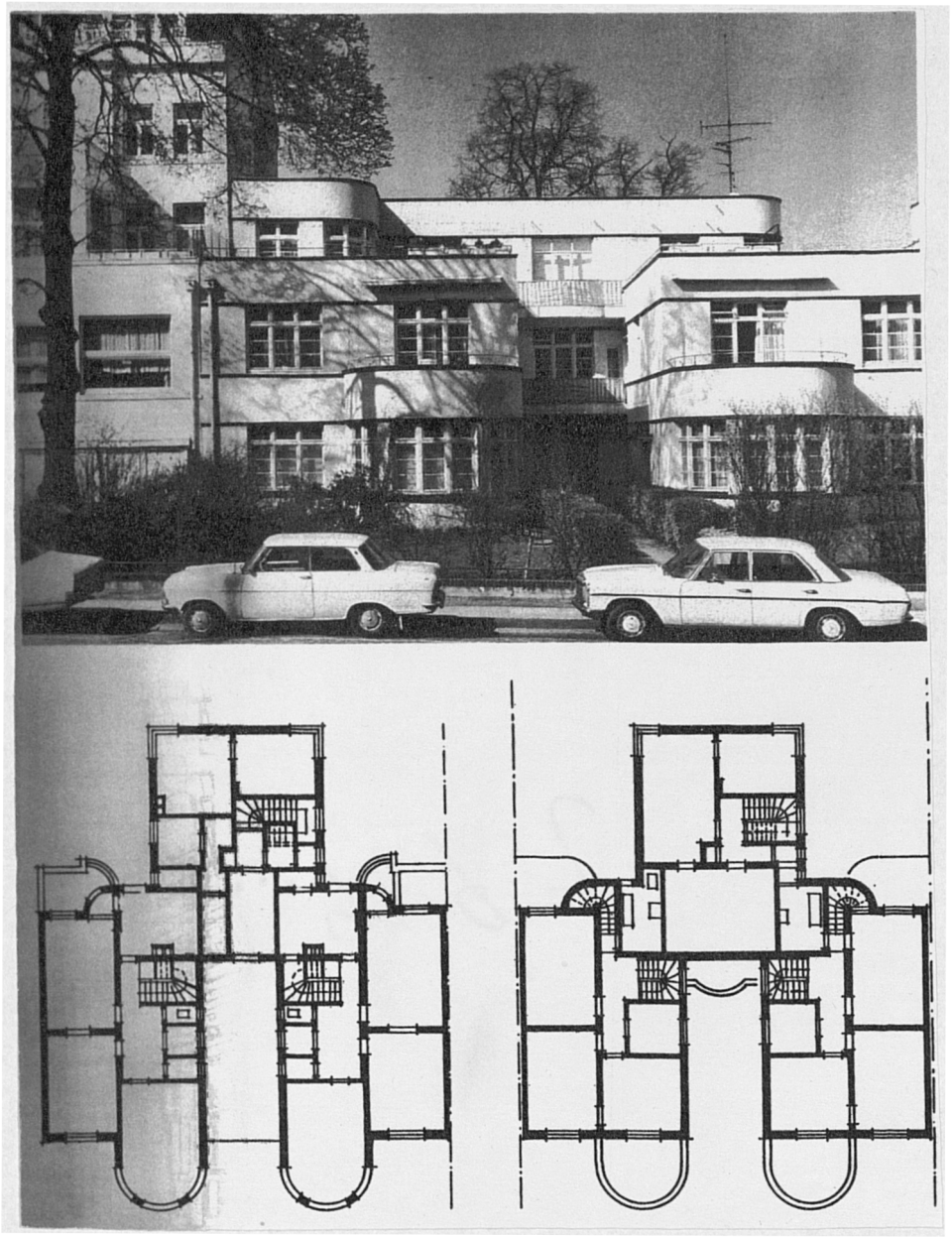



**74.** Peter Caspari, West End Court, flats, West Hampstead, London, 1938-39

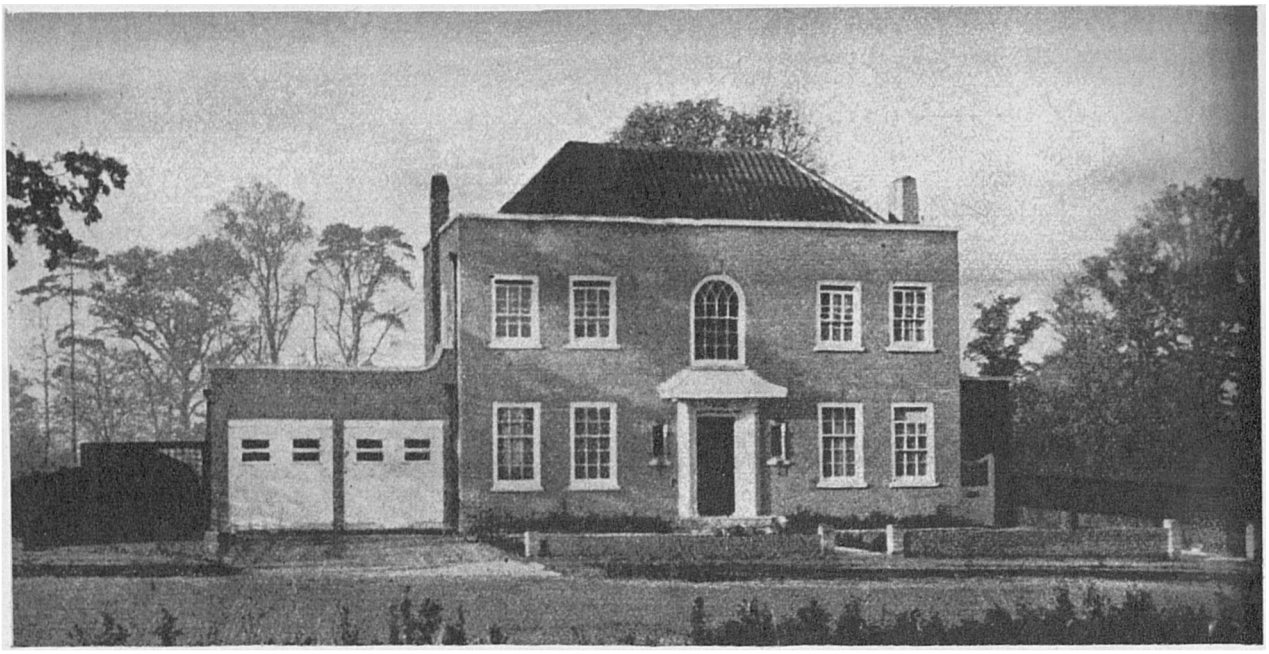
**a.** elevations, view from south

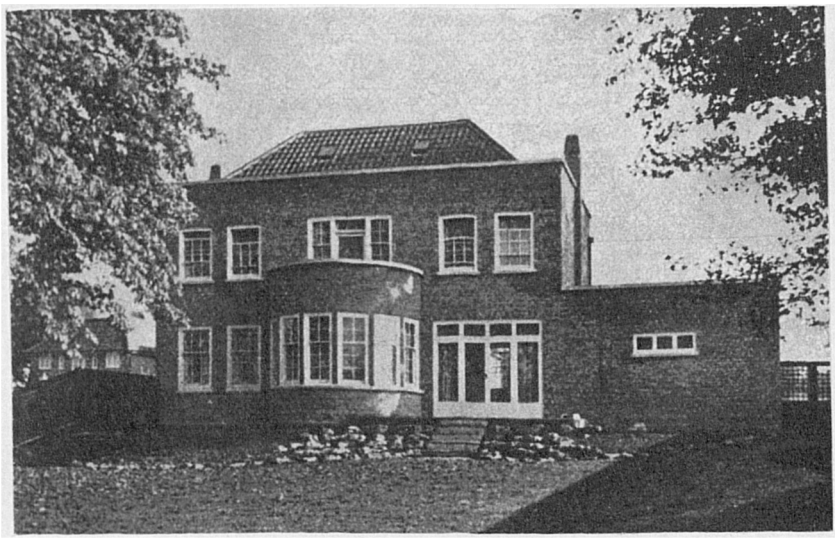
**b.** ground floor plan

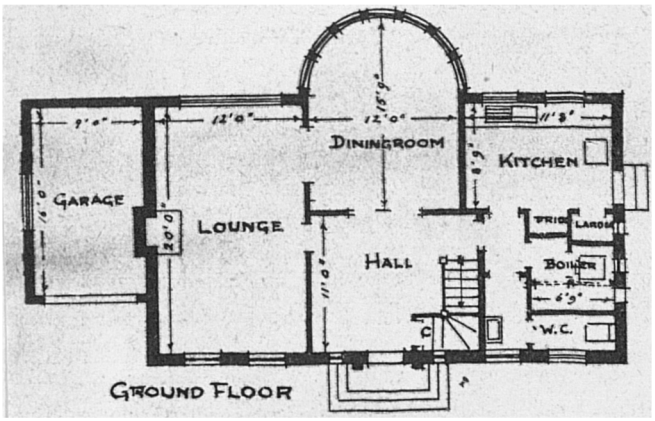

**75.** Robert Atkinson, Regency Lodge, London, 1935

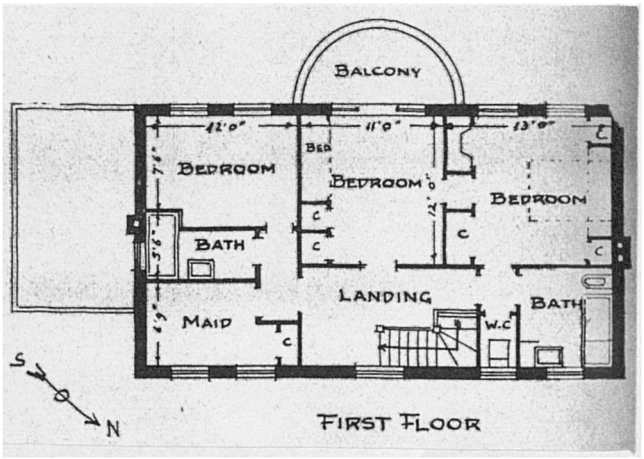


**76.** Bernd Engel, houses, Sofienterrasse, Hamburg, 1928-29
**a.** elevations, view from street
**b.** plans







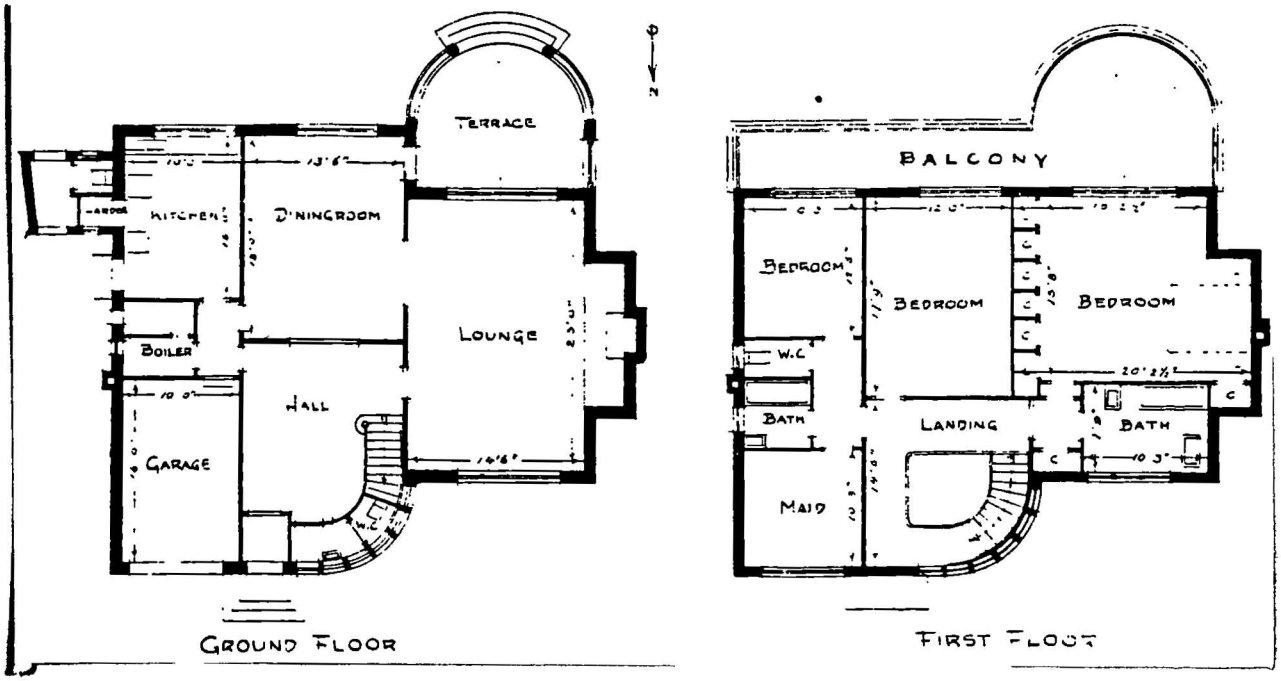




**77.** Bernd Engel (with Young), 'Queenswood', Stanmore, Middlesex, c.1939-40

**a.** entrance façade

**b.** garden façade

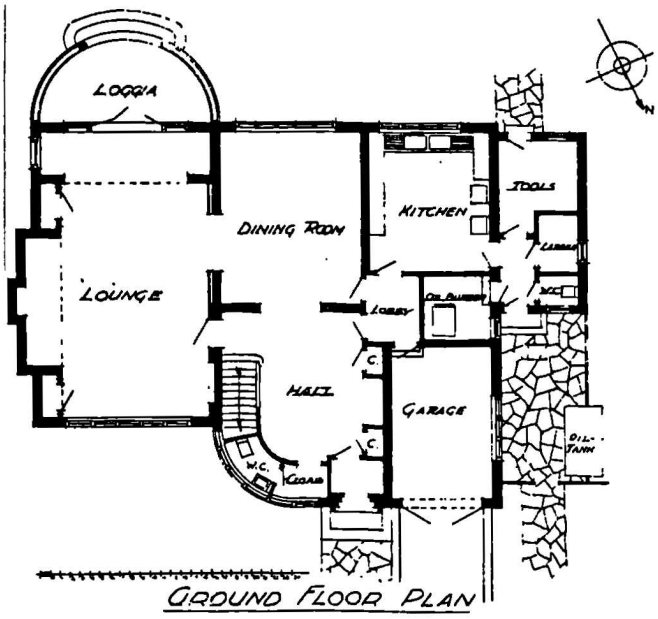
**c.** plans

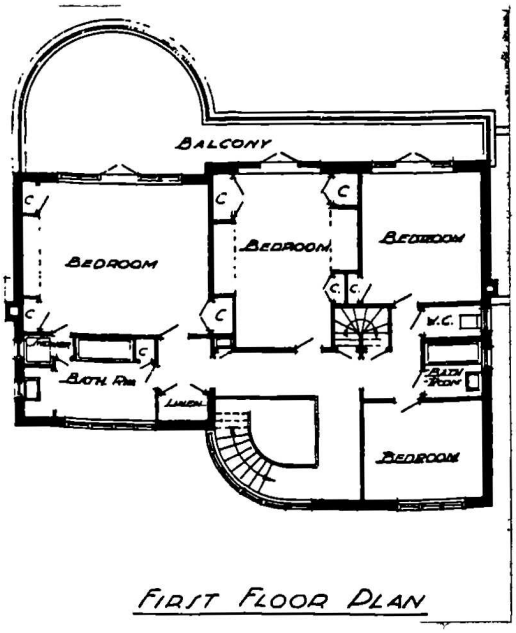


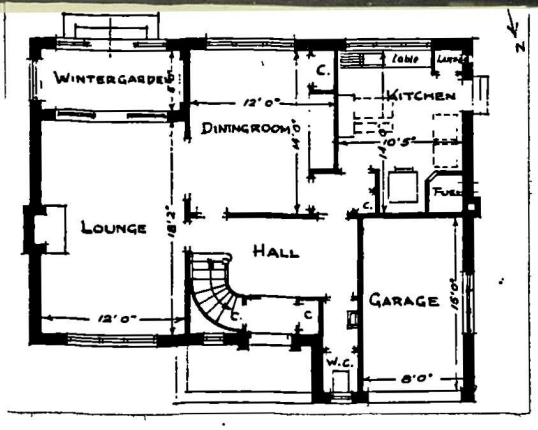

**78.** Bernd Engel (with Young), 21 & 23 Manor House Drive, Brondesbury Park, London, 1937-38

**a.** elevations, view from street

**b.** plans



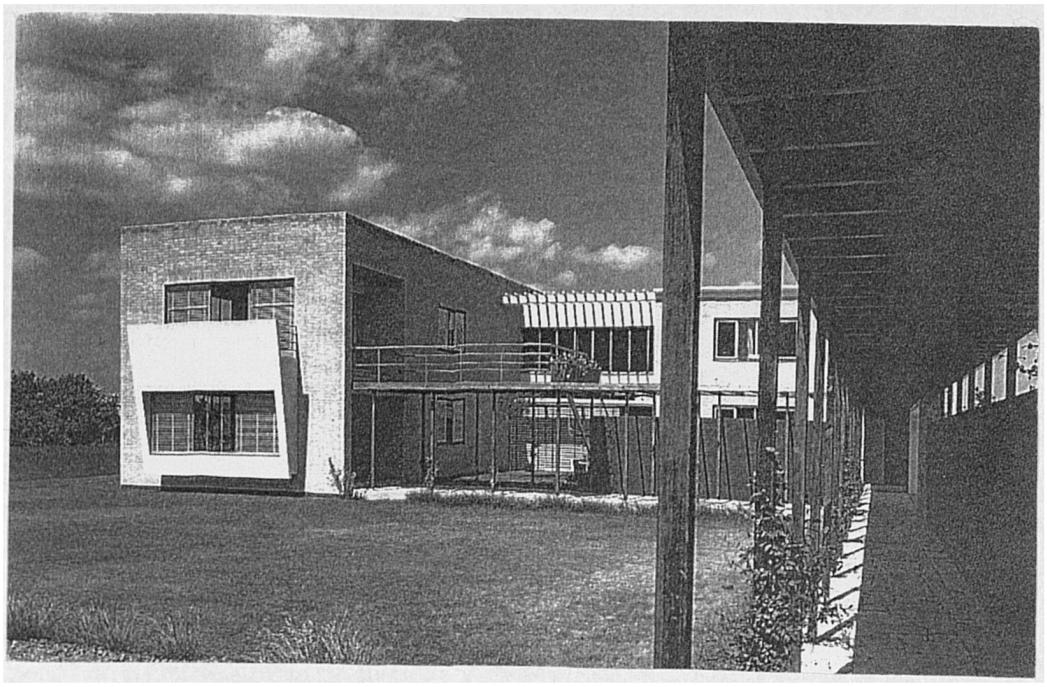



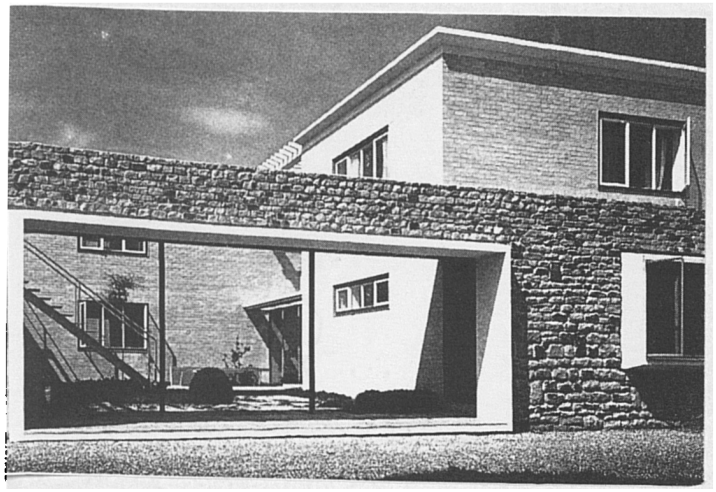



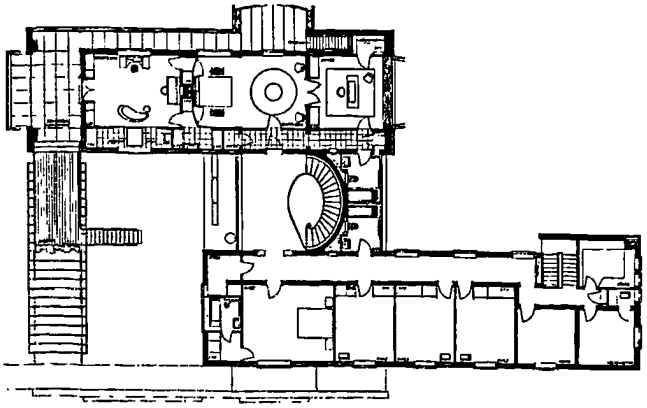

**79.** Bernd Engel (with Young), house in Hendon, Middlesex, c.1940, plans
**80.** Bernd Engel (with Young), house at Tenterden Gardens, Hendon, Middlesex, c.1938-39

**a.** elevations, view from street
**b.** ground floor plans

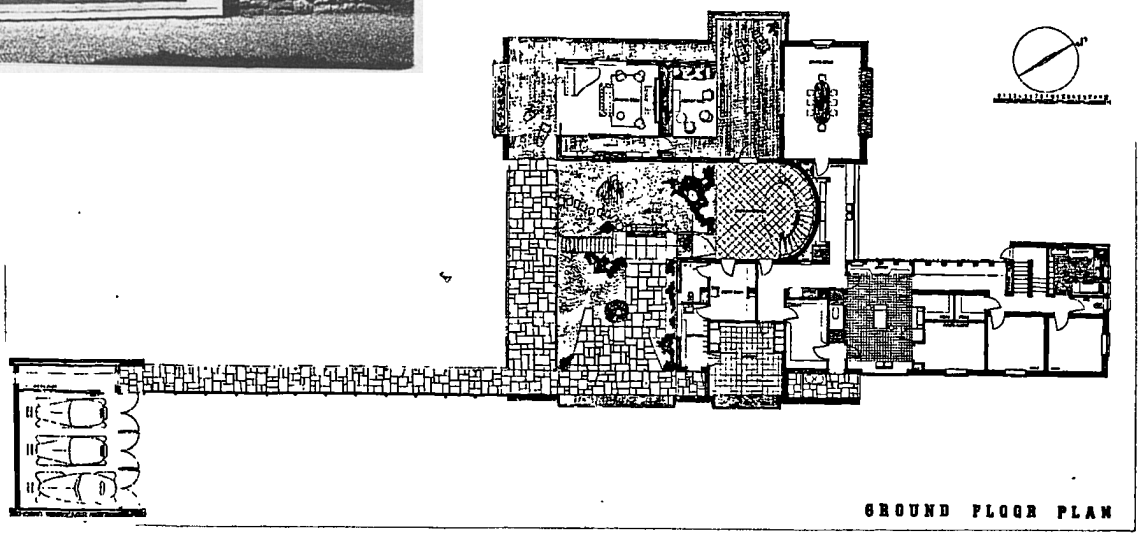

**81.** Carlludwig Franck, extension to Gestetner factory, Tottenham, London, c.1938
**82.** Peter Moro & Richard Llewelyn-Davies, 'Harbour Meadow', Birdham, 1938-39
**a.** entrance area, view of interior staircase, seen from enclosed courtyard







FIRST FLOOR PLAN



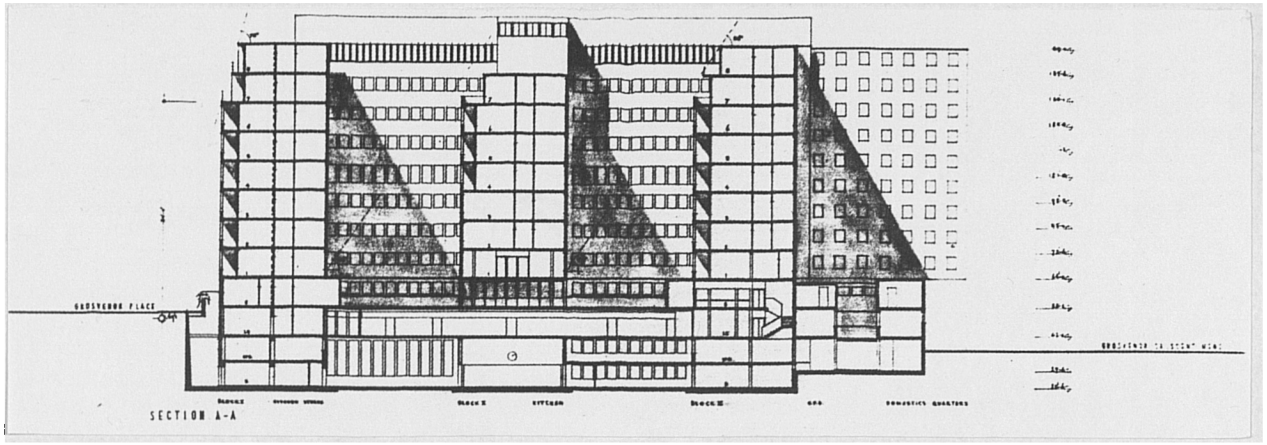
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

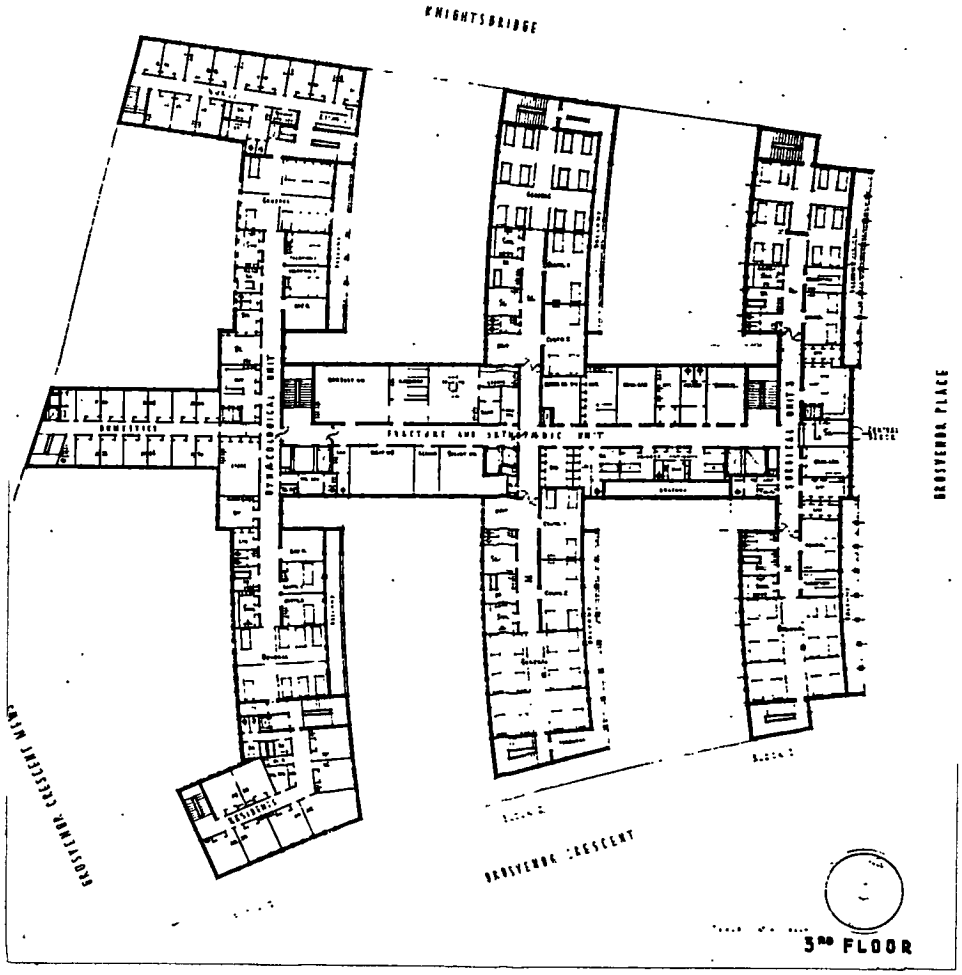
**82.** Peter Moro & Richard Llewelyn-Davies, 'Harbour Meadow', Birdham, 1938-39

**b.** view from south, showing walkway from garage to house on the right

**c.** view from east

**d.** plans

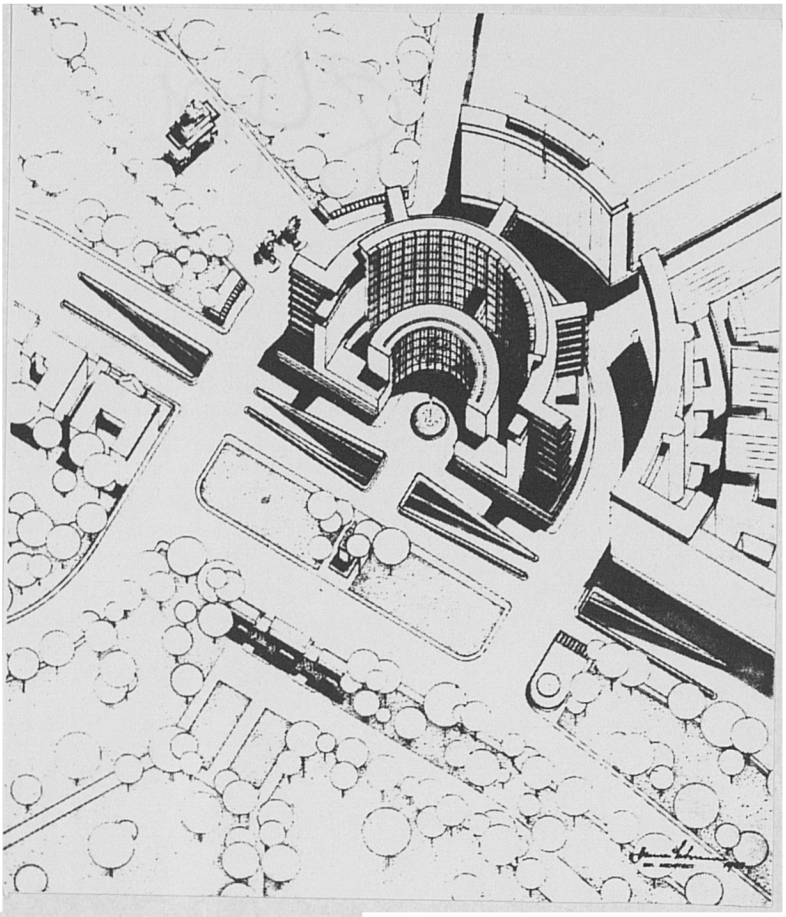


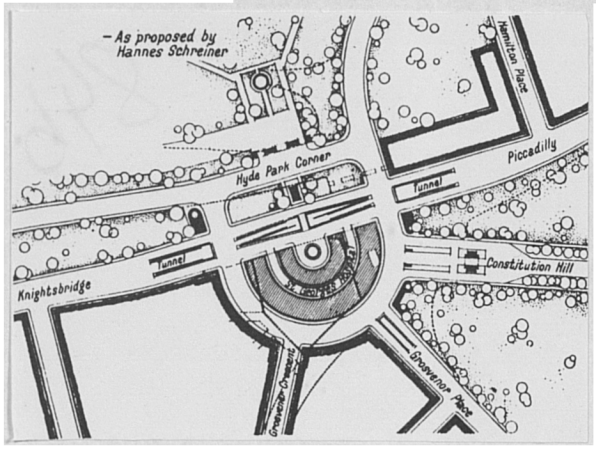



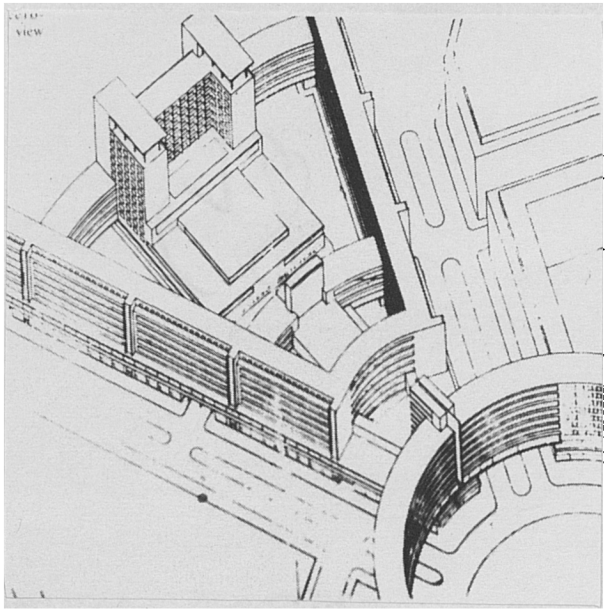

**83.** Erich Mendelsohn (with Schreiner), hospital, Hyde Park Corner, London, competition entry, 1938

**a.** elevations

**b.** plan

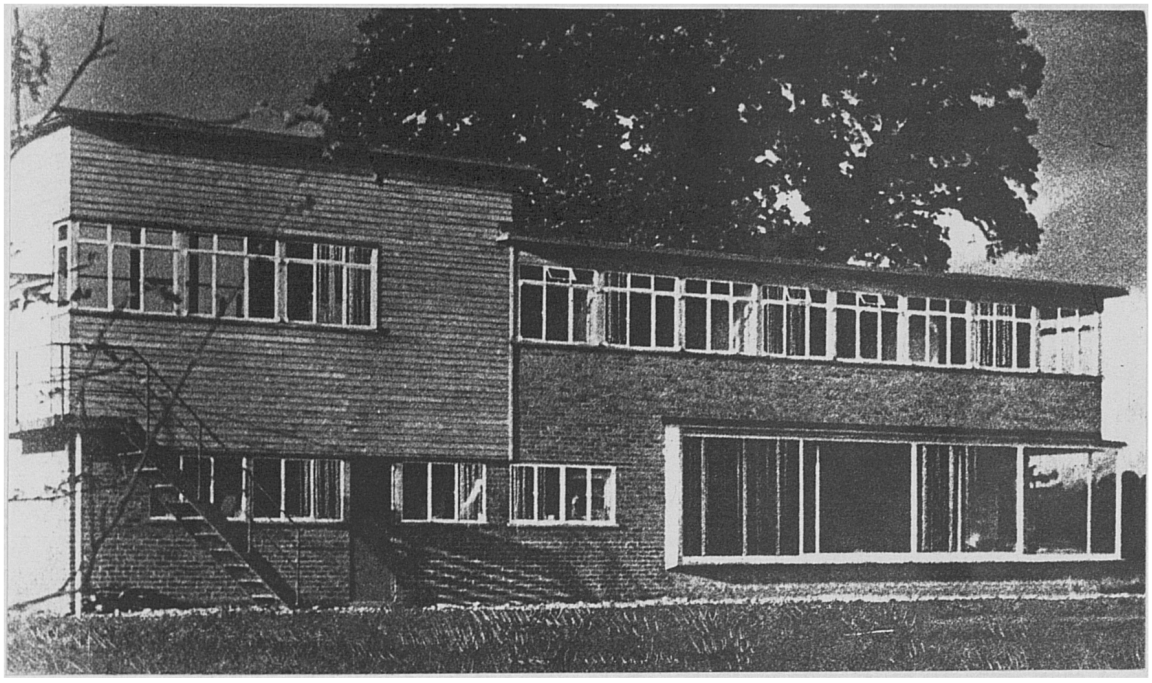




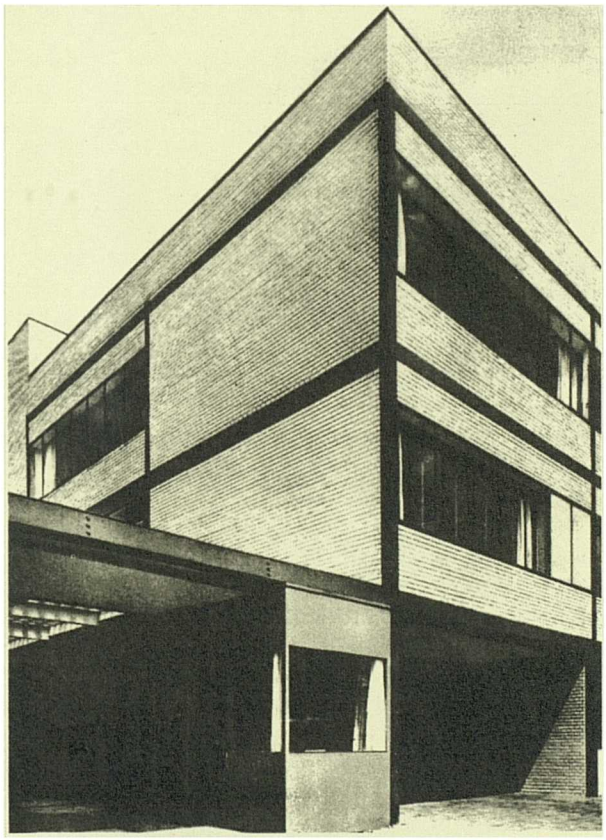
**84.** Johannes Schreiner, hospital, Hyde Park Corner, London, 1939
- **a.** axonometric
- **b.** layout plan

**85.** Erich Mendelsohn, redevelopment scheme for Alexanderplatz, Berlin, 1931



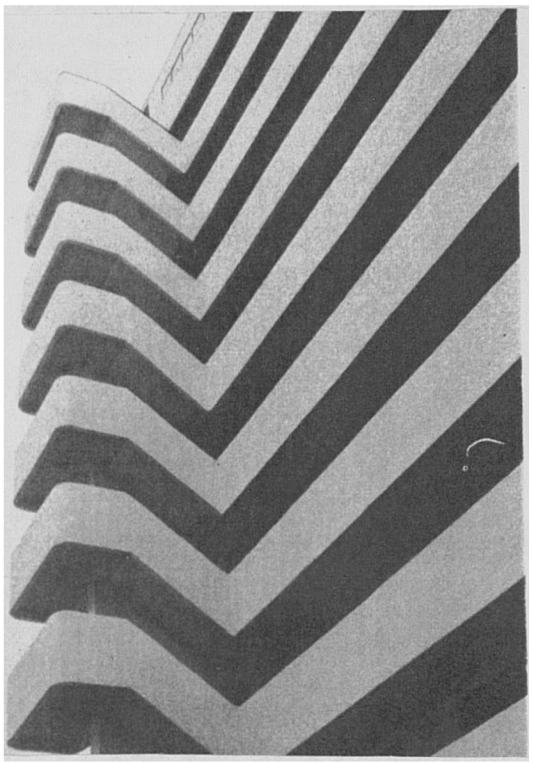

**86.** Maxwell Fry, Little Winch, Chipperfield, 1935
**87.** Erich Mendelsohn & Serge Chermayeff, Gilbey offices, Camden, London, 1937

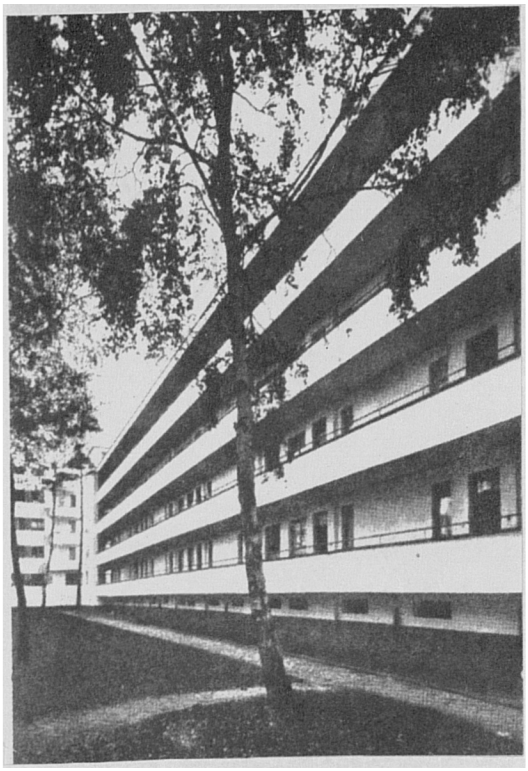
**88.** F. R. S. Yorke, workers' cottages, Stratford-upon-Avon, 1939

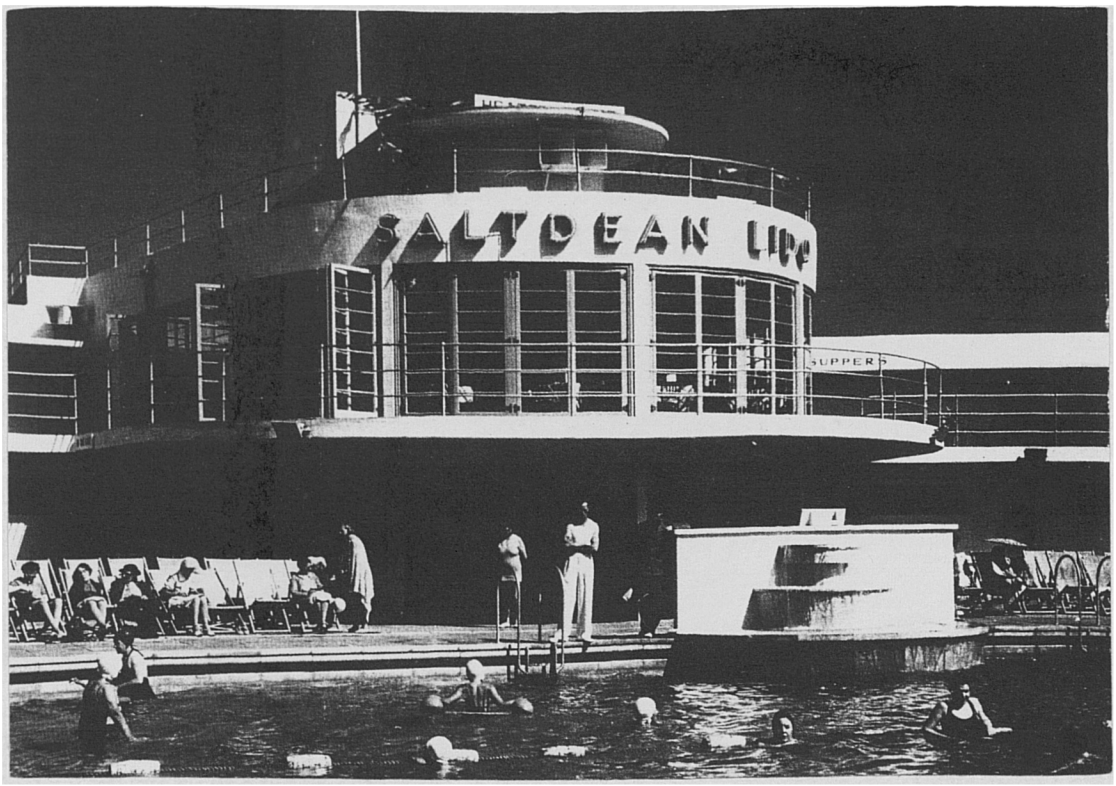


Gummifabrik Fromm, Berlin-Köpenick, 1931

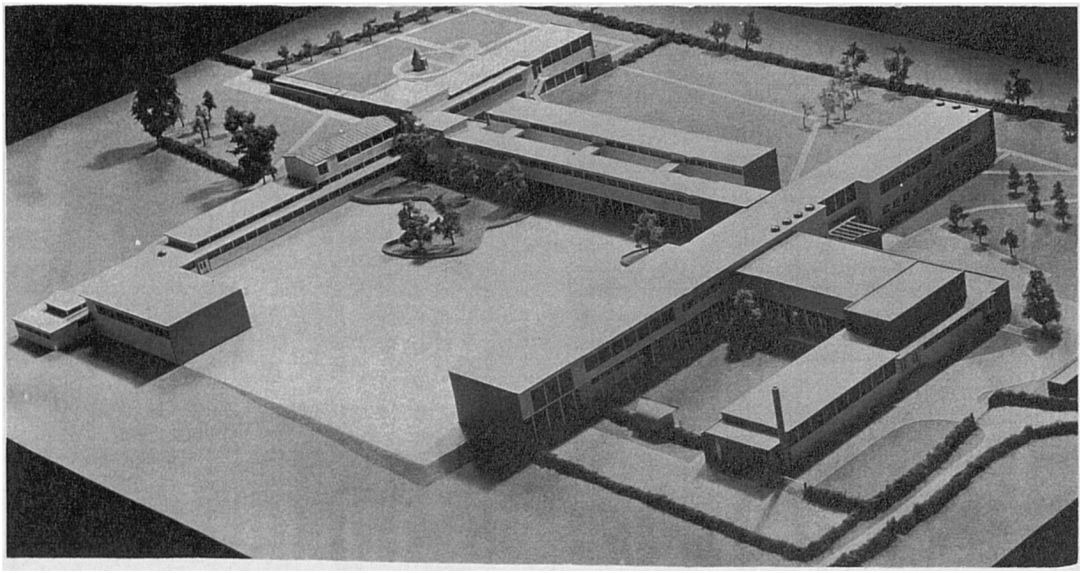
**89.** Arthur Korn & F. R. S. Yorke, flats, Lettsom Street, Camberwell, London, 1939. Korn's block of flats was later incorporated into a post-war housing estate.
**90.** Arthur Korn, rubber factory, Berlin-Köpenick, 1931








**91.** Wells Coates, Embassy Court flats, Brighton, 1934
**92.** Walter Gropius, flats, Siemensstadt, Berlin, 1929-30
**93.** R. W. H. Jones, Saltdean Lido, 1938



**94.** Yorke, Rosenberg & Mardall, Barclay Secondary School, Stevenage, 1950
**95.** Powell & Moya, Churchill Gardens, Pimlico, London, begun 1948

**96.** London County Council (Powell, Cox et al.), Alton Estate West, Roehampton, 1953